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THE LIFE AND ADVENTURES OF PEG WOFFINGTON

Days of the Dandies

Peg Woffington

Volume II.

Written by

J. Fitzgerald Molloy

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Printed by

The Grolier Society

London

IMPERIAL EDITION

Limited to One Thousand Copies
for England and America

No. 66

Edinburgh Press

468979

JUN 17 1981

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THE LIFE AND ADVENTURES OF PEG WOFFINGTON

CHAPTER I.

Goldsmith in London — Physician, Usher, and Hack Writer — the *Monthly Review* — In Green Court Arbour — Beginning the World at Thirty-one — Letters to His Friends in Ireland — The Great City by Night — Johnson's Garret — Drinking Tea with Mrs. Williams — The Great Mr. Richardson.

ORE than ten years later, another man of genius, who was destined to become one of the most polished writers of the age, one of the most delightful poets of his century, might be seen pushing his sad, slow way through the crowded, friendless streets of London. This was the simple-minded, tender-hearted Oliver Goldsmith. He had landed in Dover from his foreign travels in February, 1756, and for twelve weary days had journeyed to London, footsore and sick of heart; now acting in a barn with some strolling players, and again begging employment from an apothecary, that he might not starve before reaching the great city which was to be the scene of his future keen privations, sordid

humiliations, brief triumphs, and premature death. Penniless and almost hopeless, he, on his arrival, herded by night among the beggars in Axe Lane, and by day wandered from one druggist's shop to another, humbly asking them to let him pound their mortars, spread their ointments, and run of their messages; but "his threadbare coat," says Percy, "his uncouth figure, and his Hibernian dialect caused him to meet with repeated refusals." At last there came a day when one Jacob, living at the corner of Monument Yard in Fish Street Hill, a man who had more compassion in his heart than those to whom poor Goldsmith had previously applied, gave him employment, and he rose from being an apothecary's drudge to become a "physician in a humble way." As such he might be seen going his round in the poor districts, clad in a suit of green velvet and gold, well-worn and tarnished in the previous service of some more fortunate master; in which array he was encountered by his old schoolfellow Beatty, whom, in the face of all appearances, he assured that he was practising physic and doing very well indeed. Presently this faded finery was exchanged for a more sober suit of black velvet, which was neither new nor perfect; for on the left breast was a patch, which it was the poor physician's greatest anxiety to keep covered with his hat whilst attending his humble patients, declining their polite efforts to relieve him of its care. "But this constant position," says

Prior, who tells the story, "becoming noticed, and the cause being soon known, occasioned no little merriment at his expense."

Now it happened that amongst his patients was a workman in the employment of Samuel Richardson, the admired author, and, what was more to the purpose, the eminent publisher, who, noting the physician's neediness and suspecting his hunger, ventured to hint that, as his master was ever ready to do a kind turn to men of parts, he might be of help to Mr. Goldsmith. The mention of the printer's name stirred the physician's heart; for already he had dreams of becoming an author, and had, indeed, written a great tragedy, of which the world was never destined to hear. An introduction was therefore speedily established by this humble means between the starving physician and the prosperous publisher, who gave him employment as corrector for his press. Moreover, he gradually admitted him to his familiar intercourse and introduced him to his friends, one of whom was Doctor Young, author of "Night Thoughts."

This was indeed a great help to poor Goldsmith, who was now enabled to carry on his work as corrector for the press at the same time that he practised physic, an employment which had barely prevented starvation, and in which he beheld no chance of improvement. For Goldsmith's manner lacked the polish and his person the air of prosperity which are essential commendations in physi-

cians to the rich ; moreover, his honesty, as Prior significantly remarks, "despised that intrigue which some of his brethren find a convenient substitute for talent." So few and small indeed were his fees that he soon abandoned such poor practice as was his for an ushership at a school kept by a dissenting minister, one Doctor Milner, which was obtained for him by that gentleman's son. Here he underwent the drudgery, then even more than now inseparable to such an occupation, with a brave spirit and a cheerfulness of disposition which made him alike the delight of his pupils and the friend of his employers. His salary was small, indeed, and was mostly drawn in advance, in order that it might be spent in giving charity to beggars, or in buying fruits and sweetmeats for the boys ; so that when quarter-day came around he had little to receive, and this little went with alarming rapidity.

"Had you not better," said Mrs. Milner to him one day, "let me keep your money for you, as I do for some of the young gentlemen ?"

"In truth, madam," replied the simple-hearted usher, "there is equal need."

It was at Doctor Milner's table that he became acquainted with personages whose very names were spoken by Grub Street authors with bated breath. These were Mr. and Mrs. Griffiths, who kept a book-shop at the sign of "The Dunciad," in Paternoster Row. Griffiths was not only a bookseller,

but was likewise a printer, and the projector and proprietor of the *Monthly Review*, and in his various avocations was aided by his spouse, a lady of literary tastes. The worthy pair have been described by an irreverent pen in Smollett's *Critical Review*, probably, indeed, by that ingenious author, the one as "an illiterate bookseller," and the other as "an antiquated Sappho, a Sibyl, or, rather, a Pope Joan in taste and literature, pregnant with abuse begot by rancour under the canopy of ignorance." Now Goldsmith, who had found time during the intervals of his hard toil to produce manuscripts which were wont to fill the pockets of his rusty velvet suit until his ungainly figure looked ridiculous, saw in the worthy bookseller and his wife beings who, if they were illiterate, yet had the fateful power of enabling him to fulfil his long-cherished desire of becoming an author. So, when the discourse at Doctor Milner's table turned on literature, Goldsmith took much pains to show he was well qualified to pronounce an opinion upon such matters. Griffiths in return paid him attention, and, being acquainted with his tastes and former employment with Samuel Richardson, engaged him as a regular writer for his *Monthly Review*.

The terms which he was to receive for working six hours daily were his board and lodging and an "adequate salary." What pittance the humble usher considered adequate is not known. His

life, however, was not all that he had expected; it was, indeed, but drudgery in a new form. Not only were such articles, essays, and reviews — as he wrote invariably for six hours a day, and, occasionally, for double that time — penned at the dictation of Griffiths, but suggestions, corrections, and alterations were made by Mrs. Griffiths. Moreover, he was accused by the illiterate bookseller of affecting independence, no doubt a serious offence in the eyes of one whose word was law to the hacks he employed; and he was subjected in the domestic arrangements to many privations by the antiquated Sappho, — "a woman," says De Quincey, "who would have broken the back of a camel, which must be supposed tougher than the heart of an usher."

His connection with them, therefore, did not last long. At the end of about five months he parted from them with mutual dissatisfaction; and the poor drudge found himself free once more, and happy in his freedom, though it was attained at the cost of probable starvation. He was again upon the streets, struggling for bread by day, lying Heaven knows where by night; making hard shifts to live — for to live was now his sole ambition. Then when starvation dogged him through the friendless streets, he turned to Doctor Milner's school once more, and sought refuge in the drudgery of an ushership.

After his brief experience as an author, the life

of an usher seems to have become doubly irksome to him, and he soon left Doctor Milner's academy, and, toward the end of 1758, took a lodging in Green Arbour Court, in the Old Bailey, when he set to work upon "An Inquiry into the Present State of Polite Literature in Europe," a work he fondly trusted would bring him money and reputation. This lodging was a single room in a garret; uncomfortable, miserably poor, nay, "wretchedly dirty," according to the statement of a friend of his, the Rev. Thomas Percy.

This gentleman, who afterward became Lord Bishop of Dromore, but who is now better remembered as the ingenious author of the "Reliques," had been introduced to Goldsmith at the "Temple Exchange Coffee-house." Being one who loved letters greatly, and relished the society of those who pertained to the profession of literature, he was vastly pleased with Goldsmith's conversation, which, beneath the clearness of its simplicity, showed sparkling gems of thought and precious ore of fancies. So delighted was he with the poor writer, that, soon after their first meeting, he must wait on him in his garret, which he found so wretched; a circumstance, he avows, he would not think of mentioning did he not consider it the highest proof of Goldsmith's genius and talents that by "the bare exertion of their powers, under every disadvantage of person and fortune, he could gradually emerge from such obscurity to the enjoy-

ment of all the comforts, and even luxuries, of life, and admission into the best societies in London. There was but one chair," says Mr. Percy, "and when he from civility offered it to his visitant, he himself was obliged to sit in the window. Whilst conversing some one gently rapped at the door, and, being desired to come in, a poor, ragged little girl of very decent behaviour entered, who, dropping a curtsey, said, 'My mamma sends her compliments, and begs the favour of you to lend her a chamber-pot full of coals.'"

It was long before Goldsmith was to enjoy the society of the polite and learned; but meanwhile, he was, as he writes to "Robert Bryanton, Esquire, at Ballymahon, Ireland," "in a garret, writing for bread, and expecting to be dunned for a milk score." This letter, and others penned in this lodging, he headed "Temple Exchange Coffee-house, where answers may be directed," being anxious to withhold the name of the humble abode which sheltered him from the knowledge of those whom he addressed. Though the general tone of these epistles is cheerful, and even occasionally indulges in hopeful fancies for the future, yet here and there are touches which reveal the hard condition of the poor hack in vivid colours.

"I must confess it gives me some pain," he writes to his brother, the Rev. Henry Goldsmith, "to think I am almost beginning the world at the age of thirty-one. Though I never had a day's

sickness since I saw you, yet I am not that strong, active man you once knew me. You scarcely can conceive how much eight years of disappointment, anguish, and study have worn me down. If I remember right, you are seven or eight years older than me, yet I dare venture to say, if a stranger saw us both, he would pay me the honours of seniority. Imagine to yourself a pale, melancholy visage, with two great wrinkles between the eyebrows, with an eye disgustingly severe, and a big wig, and you may have a perfect picture of my present appearance." Then he goes on to paint the contrast which he imagines exists between them. "On the other hand," he says, "I conceive you as perfectly sleek and healthy, passing many a happy day among your own children, or those who knew you as a child. Since I knew what it is to be a man, this is a pleasure I have not known. I have passed my days among a parcel of cool, designing beings, and have contracted all their suspicious manner in my own behaviour. I should actually be as unfit for the society of my friends at home, as I detest that which I am obliged to partake of here. I can now neither partake of the pleasure of a revel, nor contribute to raise its jollity. I can neither laugh, nor drink, have contracted an hesitating, disagreeable manner of speaking, and a visage that looks ill-nature itself; in short, I have thought myself into a settled melancholy, and an utter disgust of all life brings with it."

One cannot but smile at the idea of simple-hearted, trusting Oliver Goldsmith becoming suspicious in his manner. In another letter which he wrote to Mrs. Jane Lawder at this time, he lays bare more than a corner of his foolish, tender heart. He apologises for not having lately written to her because he was in such circumstances that all his endeavours to retain her regard might be attributed to wrong motives. He fears his letters might have been looked upon as the petitions of a beggar, instead of the offerings of a friend; whilst his professions, instead of being considered as the result of disinterested esteem, might be ascribed to venal insincerity. No doubt Mrs. Jane Lawder had too much generosity to place them in such a light, but he could not bear even the shadow of a suspicion. The most delicate friendships, he reminds her, are always most sensible of the slightest invasion, and the strongest jealousy is ever attendant on the warmest regard. He could not, therefore, continue a correspondence, for every acknowledgment for past favours might be considered as an indirect request for future ones.

"It is true," he continues, in this charming letter, "this conduct might have been simple enough, but yourself must confess it was in character. Those who know me at all know that I have always been actuated by different principles from the rest of mankind, and while none regarded the interest of his friend more, no man on earth regarded his

own less. I have often affected bluntness to avoid the imputation of flattery, have frequently seemed to overlook those merits too obvious to escape notice, and pretended disregard to those instances of good nature and good sense which I could not fail tacitly to applaud; and all this lest I should be ranked amongst the grinning tribe, who say 'Very true' to all that is said; who fill a vacant chair at a tea-table; whose narrow souls never moved in a wider circle than the circumference of a guinea; and who had rather be reckoning the money in your pocket than the virtue of your breast. All this, I say, I have done, and a thousand other very silly, though very disinterested, things in my time, and for all which no soul cares a farthing about me. God's curse, madam! is it to be wondered that he should once in his life forget you, who has been all his life forgetting himself?

"However," he says, playfully, "it is probable you may one of those days see me turned into a perfect hunks, and as dark and intricate as a mouse-hole. I have already given my landlady orders for an entire reform in the state of my finances. I declaim against hot suppers, drink less sugar in my tea, and check my grate with brickbats. Instead of hanging my room with pictures, I intend to adorn it with maxims of frugality. Those will make pretty furniture enough, and won't be a bit too expensive; for I

shall draw them all out with my own hands, and my landlady's daughter shall frame them with the parings of my black waistcoat. Each maxim is to be inscribed on a sheet of clean paper, and wrote with my best pen; of which the following will serve as a specimen: 'Look sharp;' 'Mind the main chance;' 'If you have a thousand pounds you can put your hands by your sides and say you are worth a thousand pounds every day of the year;' 'Take a farthing from a hundred and it will be a hundred no longer.' Thus, which way soever I turn my eyes, they are sure to meet one of those friendly monitors; and as we are told of an actor who hung his room round with looking-glass to correct the defects of his person, my apartment shall be furnished in a peculiar manner to correct the errors of my mind.

"Faith, madam," he concludes, "I heartily wish to be rich, if it were only for this reason, to say without a blush how much I esteem you; but alas, I have many a fatigue to encounter before that happy time comes when your poor old simple friend may again give a loose to the luxuriance of his nature, sitting by Kilmore fireside, recount the various adventures of a hard-fought life, laugh over the follies of the day, join his flute to the harpsichord, and forget that ever he starved in those streets where Butler and Otway starved before him."

Meanwhile he patiently endured "the mean-

nesses which poverty unavoidably brings with it," and worked hard — translating French works for the booksellers, writing essays for the magazines, and executing such odd literary jobs as came in his way. At one time he thinks that at last fortune is beginning to look more kindly on him, and again the fickle jade but frowns upon his endeavours. To a sensitive nature such as his the merest trifle served to imbue him to-day with the sunlight of hope, or wrap him to-morrow in the gloom of despair. But two brief months after his declaration that fortune was looking kindlier upon him, he writes to Griffiths, who had lent him clothes which in great necessity he had pawned, begging that he might be sent to gaol, "as a favour that may prevent something more fatal. I have been," he cries out, when at last he is goaded by misery and despondency to make complaint, "some years struggling with a wretched being with all that contempt which indigence brings with it, with all those strong passions which make contempt insupportable. What then has a gaol that is formidable? I shall at least have the society of wretches, and such is, to me, true society.

"Had I been a sharper," he continues, with a bitterness wrung from his heart, "had I been possessed of less good nature and native generosity, I might surely now have been in better circumstances. I am guilty, I own, of meannesses

which poverty unavoidably brings with it; my reflections are filled with repentance for my imprudence, but not with any remorse for being a villain — that may be a character you unjustly charge me with. It is very possible both the reports you have heard and your own suggestions may have brought you false information with respect to my character; it is very possible that the man whom you now regard with detestation may inwardly burn with grateful resentment; it is very possible that, upon a second perusal of the letter I sent you, you may see the workings of a mind strongly agitated with gratitude and jealousy. If such circumstances should appear, at least spare invective till my book with Mr. Dodsley shall be published, and then perhaps you may see the bright side of a mind, when my profession shall not appear the dictates of necessity, but of choice."

At this time he felt, indeed, the full misery of his unhappy lot, and now and then words of self-commiseration, bubbling to the surface of his correspondence, would tell of the deep pain which beset his mind. When the Rev. Henry Goldsmith, in Ireland, is solicitous about the education of his son, and consults as to his future with Oliver, the latter replies that he must be taught thrift and economy; for frugality and even avarice are true ambition, they affording the only ladder for the poor to rise to preferment. "Let his poor uncle's example be placed before his eyes,"

he continues. "I had learned from books to be disinterested and generous, before I was taught from experience the necessity of being prudent. I had contracted the habits and notions of a philosopher, while I was exposing myself to the insidious approaches of cunning; and often by being, even with my narrow finances, charitable to excess, I forgot the rules of justice, and placed myself in the very situation of the wretch who thanked me for my bounty. Tell him this, and perhaps he may improve upon my example."

Griffiths spared him the humiliation of sending him to gaol, and he was left in the undisturbed possession of that close garret-chamber which was so little indebted to the attentions of the house-maid. Here it was his habit to work steadily through the day, seated at a little window which commanded a view of innumerable chimneys and roofs of thickly crowded houses. Occasionally, in order to vary the monotony of his labours, he would assemble the children of Green Arbour Court in his poor chamber, and taking up the flute, which had ever been his resource from painful thoughts and sad, induce them to dance to its music. Then at night, locking up his door, he descended from his attic, and wandered through the lonely streets, up and down which he had so often trudged hungry and hopeless. The result of one of these solitary night walks was the production of the "City Night Piece," perhaps the

most realistic and pathetic essay he ever penned. It also serves to give us a vivid etching of the London streets by night. The opening paragraph is in itself a picture. "The clock has struck two, the expiring taper rises and sinks in the socket, the watchman forgets the hour in slumber, the laborious and the happy are at rest, and nothing now wakes but guilt, revelry, and despair. . . . Let me no longer waste the page over the night of antiquity or the sallies of contemporary genius; but pursue the solitary walk where vanity, ever changing, but a few hours past walked before me, when she kept up the pageant, and now, like a forward child, seems hushed with her own importunities. What gloom hangs all round! The dying lamp emits a yellow gleam, no sound is heard but of the chiming clock or the distant watch-dog. All the bustle of pride is forgotten, and this hour may well display the emptiness of human vanity." Then he paints the deserted streets which but a little while ago were crowded, and in which those who now appear no longer wear their daily masks, nor attempt to hide their hardness, nor their misery. "But who," he asks, "are those who make the streets their couch, and find a short repose from wretchedness at the doors of the opulent? These are strangers, wanderers, and orphans, whose circumstances are too humble to expect redress, and their distresses too great even for pity. Some are without the covering

even of rags, and others emaciated with disease; the world seems to have disclaimed them; society turns its back upon their distress, and has given them up to nakedness and hunger. These poor, shivering females have once seen happier days, and been flattered into beauty. They have been prostituted to the gay, luxurious villain, and are now turned out to meet the severity of winter in the streets; perhaps, now lying at the doors of their betrayers, they sue to wretches whose hearts are insensible to calamity, or debauchees who may curse, but will not relieve them."

Early in 1759 his "Enquiry" was published, from which time the severest part of his life struggle ceased. He was now soon to leave Green Arbour Court, with its polluted atmosphere, crowded tenements, and squalid misery, for more comfortable quarters in Wine Office Court. And though he was yet to shrink from the dreaded presence of the bailiff, he had bidden farewell to hunger; though he was still to shed tears of vexation on the reception of one of his plays, his feet had left the pathway of despair for the certain road to fame.

About this time he met with Samuel Johnson, a man whose name had become familiar to the town as the compiler of a great dictionary, as a writer whose influence had begun to make itself felt, as one who, though in need of the patronage of the great, had openly dared to despise the

favour of a lord. "This was," Goldsmith says, in speaking of his first encounter with the great man, "a very grave personage, whom at some distance I took for one of the most reserved and even disagreeable figures I had seen; but as he approached his appearance improved; and when I could distinguish him thoroughly, I perceived that, in spite of the severity of his brow, he had one of the most good-natured countenances that could be imagined."

Johnson was, at the time they became acquainted, living in Gough Square, hard by Fleet Street, where he had written his dictionary, and where he was now preparing his edition of "Shakespeare," the subscriptions for which constituted the only means of his subsistence. His study, if it may be designated by such a name, was, according to Doctor Burney, situated in a poor garret, sparsely furnished with "an old crazy deal table," a chair and a half; his sole library being represented by six Greek folios and some of the volumes of "Shakespeare," at which he was working. Here the sage, clad in a suit of rusty brown, would, whilst balancing himself with considerable dexterity on a chair which could boast of but three legs and an arm, deliver himself of opinions on all things in heaven and on earth. The while he shook his great head in a tremulous manner; moved his body backwards and forwards with a swaying motion; rubbed his left knee with the

palm of his hand ; and in the intervals of articulation made various sounds with his mouth, "as if ruminating, or what is called chewing the cud, sometimes giving a half whistle, sometimes making his tongue play backwards and forwards from the roof of his mouth, as if clucking like a hen, and sometimes protruding it against his upper gums in front, as if pronouncing under his breath, *too, too, too* — all this accompanied sometimes with a thoughtful look, but more frequently with a smile."

Then if such visitors as he entertained in his study found favour in his sight, he would invite them to his apartments below to drink tea with his friend and companion, Mrs. Anna Williams. This pale, shrunken, blind old lady, the daughter of a late ingenious Welsh physician, was a woman of some literary ability — inasmuch as she had a knowledge of the French and Italian languages, translated the life of the Emperor Julian, and wrote verses ; moreover, she was a remarkable conversationalist, and possessed vast powers of entertainment. She had been a friend of Mrs. Johnson some time before the death of that lady, and when she lost her sight through cataract, Johnson, out of the charity of his great heart, made her the partner of his dwelling. Not only was her mind well-informed, and her manner sprightly, but her appearance was genteel, and must have brightened up the otherwise solitary lodgings of the great

man, who, notwithstanding the resources of his mind, was ever unwilling to be left alone. Miss Hawkins, in her interesting "Memoirs," speaks of Mrs. Williams as "an old lady dressed in scarlet made in the handsome French fashion, with a lace cap, with two stiffened, projecting wings on the temples, and a black lace hood over it."

So attired, she would sit at a little table in Johnson's rooms, making tea for such friends as he carried with him from Dodsley's or Newberry's shop, or the "Bedford," or "Turk's Head Coffee-house." Johnson was an inveterate, or, as he describes himself, "a hardened and shameless tea-drinker, who has for many years diluted his meals with only the infusion of this fascinating plant; whose kettle has scarcely time to cool, who with tea amuses the evening, with tea solaces the midnights, and with tea welcomes the morning." [1] Never was he in such excellent humour with himself and the world at large than when drinking cup after cup of this beverage at Mrs. Williams's

[1] Northcote, in his life of Reynolds, says that "Johnson's extraordinary, or rather extravagant, fondness for this refreshment did not fail to excite notice wherever he went," and it is related that whilst on his Scottish tour, and spending some time at Dunvegan, the castle of the chief of the Macleods, the Dowager Lady Macleod, having repeatedly helped him until she had poured out sixteen cups, then asked him if a small basin would not save him trouble, and be more agreeable. "I wonder, madam," answered he, roughly, "why all the ladies ask me such questions! It is to save yourself trouble, madam, and not me." The lady was silent, and resumed her task.

table. Notwithstanding her blindness, the old lady brewed tea with considerable dexterity; "though," adds one who sat at her board, "her manner of satisfying herself that the cups were full enough appeared a little awkward, for she put her finger down a certain way till she felt the tea touch it." [1]

Gathered around Mrs. Williams's tea-table we find a right pleasant company, such as Goldsmith, who entertained a high opinion of his hostess; Doctor Burney, the musician; Shiels, the poor poet; Mr. Diamond, the apothecary from Cork Street, Burlington Gardens, with whom Mrs. Williams dined every Sunday; Mrs. Masters, the poetess "who lived with Mr. Cave;" David Garrick and Peg Woffington; Mr. Bennet Langton, a young gentleman with a "mild countenance, elegant features, and a sweet smile," who hailed from Trinity College, Oxford; Mr. Topham Beauclerk, a beau of the first distinction, a conversationalist of the choicest wit, whom Johnson loved; Mrs. Gardiner, a worthy woman, wife to a tallow-chandler in Snow Hill; Mr. Dodsley, the bookseller; Mr. Strahan, the printer; and young Mr. Reynolds, the painter, who had, since 1752, fixed

[1] In justice, it must be added that Percy says, "When she made tea for Johnson and his friends, she conducted it with so much delicacy, by gently touching the outside of the cup, to feel, by the heat, the tea as it ascended within, that it was rather matter of admiration than of dislike."

himself in handsome apartments in St. Martin's Lane. Johnson having refreshed himself with his favourite beverage, Mrs. Williams, knowing his ways, would lead the great man on to talk, whilst those around listened with the utmost attention, putting a question here, or asserting an opinion there, for the purpose of eliciting further reflections on the discourse which occupied him; for his conversation, as Hogarth said, illustrating his speech by a simile savouring of his profession, was, to the talk of other men, like Titian's painting compared with Hudson's. Mrs. Williams, on these occasions, would likewise divert the company, having a most retentive memory, and loving gossip greatly. At such times her temper, which "was marked by Welsh fire," was placid; but at other periods of the day it was wont to be much exercised by the meaner inmates of the upper floors of Johnson's house, as well as by the black boy, Francis Barber, whom the sage kept, partly through charity, partly from love of his "dear, dear Bathurst," whose father had brought the negro to England. The black boy was supposed to act as body servant to the philosopher; though, as Sir John Hawkins observes, "the uses for which Francis was intended to serve Johnson were not very apparent, for Diogenes himself never wanted a servant less than he seemed to do. The great, bushy wig, which throughout his life he affected to wear, by that closeness of texture

which it had contracted and had been suffered to retain, was ever nearly as impenetrable by a comb as a quickset hedge; and little of the dust that had once settled on his outer garments was ever known to have been disturbed by the brush."

Northcote states that he was so uncouth in his gait and action, and so slovenly in his dress, as to attract the attention of passengers who met him in the street. On one occasion an impertinent jackanapes whom he passed was so diverted by the philosopher's appearance that he commenced to imitate him in a most ludicrous manner. Johnson turned and saw him, and being most sensitive to ridicule, was so greatly angered that he at once determined on giving a practical proof of his feelings. Therefore, going up to the man, he said, "You are a very weak fellow, and I will convince you of it," on which he gave him a blow which sent the man out of the footpath into the dirty street flat on his back, when Johnson walked calmly on. His slovenliness, indeed, frequently brought him humiliation. Northcote also tells that one afternoon when Johnson, in company with Reynolds and his sister, went to visit the Miss Cotterells of Cavendish Street, who were neighbours of his, he was caused great pain by an unhappy mistake. Arriving at the door of the Miss Cotterells' house, the maid servant, by accident, let them in, but did not know Johnson, though he had been a frequent visitor, he having

always heretofore been admitted by the man servant. "Johnson was the last of the three visitors that came in; when the servant maid, seeing this uncouth and dirty figure of a man, and not conceiving he could be one of the company who came to visit her mistresses, laid hold of his coat just as he was going up-stairs, and pulled him back again, saying:

"'You fellow, what is your business here? I suppose you intended to rob the house.'

"This most unlucky accident threw poor Johnson into such a fit of shame and anger that he roared out like a bull; for he could not immediately articulate, and was with difficulty at last able to utter, 'What have I done? What have I done?' Nor could he recover himself for the remainder of the evening from this mortifying circumstance." His sensitiveness to his appearance was such that at least on one occasion it made him apprehensive of a slight where none was intended. Reynolds used to tell that when he and the great man were one afternoon calling on a gentleman who lived much in the fashionable world, the Duchess of Argyle and another lady of the first rank came in. Johnson, thinking that his hostess became too much engrossed with these fine friends, to the neglect of himself and Reynolds, of whom he fancied she was ashamed, grew angry. He therefore resolved to shock her supposed pride by making the great visitors imagine

he and the painter were low indeed; and addressing himself to Reynolds, in a loud voice, said, "How much do you think you and I could get in a week, if we were to work as hard as we could?" the inference which he wished to have drawn being that they were common mechanics.

Johnson and Reynolds had become friends from the hour of their first introduction, which had taken place in the Miss Cotterells' drawing-room, by reason of an ingenious remark which the young painter made, to Johnson's prodigious satisfaction. The ladies on this occasion were deeply regretting the death of a friend to whom they owed vast obligations, upon which Reynolds observed, "You have, however, the comfort of being relieved from the burden of gratitude." The Miss Cotterells professed themselves shocked at the suggestion; but Johnson, after his manner, stoutly defended it, and expressed himself pleased with the just view of human nature which Mr. Reynolds's remark exhibited. When the painter after awhile bowed himself out of the ladies' presence, Johnson jumped up, accompanied him to his rooms, and supped with him, and in this manner commenced that pleasant friendship which lasted for years, and ended but with death. The fact that the young painter had read and admired the author's "Life of Savage" had, no doubt, made clear the way for their subsequent intimacy. Happening to meet the volume whilst in Devon-

shire, Reynolds opened and began to read it "while he was standing, with his arm leaning against a chimneypiece. It seized his attention so strongly that, not being able to lay down the book until he had finished it, when he attempted to move, he found his arm totally benumbed."

Reynolds, as became a young man of parts, had a vast admiration for distinguished writers, and especially for Samuel Richardson. Johnson, therefore, who at this time was well acquainted with this ingenious author, who he says, "has enlarged the knowledge of human nature, and taught the passions to move at the command of virtue," promised to introduce the artist and his sister, and accordingly carried them down to the bookseller's shop, and made them known to the printer. On their way thither, Johnson hinted that if they wanted to see Richardson in good humour, they must expatiate on the excellencies of his "Clarissa." This was what Johnson had done himself more than once, though no doubt his admiration was genuine, and had arisen not only from the merits of the author, but from gratitude at having been released by him on one occasion from the sponging-house. "Though the story is long," he writes to Richardson, "every letter is short." (The story, it will be remembered, is told in a series of epistles.) Then he begs him to add an *index rerum* to the work, "for 'Clarissa' is not a performance to be read with

cagerness, and laid aside for ever, but will be occasionally consulted by the busy, the aged, and the studious." [1]

Before we take leave of ingenious Samuel Johnson's pleasant company, let us saunter with him as he takes his evening walk, accompanied by Langton or Topham Beauclerk, in the long, narrow, paved court, overshadowed by trees, close by Holborn; where the noise of the human current close by falls with a placid murmur that soothes his troubled meditations. There were few who loved the great capital better than he. To him it was a place of residence, preëminent over every other; a great field of genius and exertion, where talents of every kind had their fullest scope and their highest encouragement, — a very fountain of intelligence and pleasure. "London is nothing to some people," he said; "but to a man whose pleasure is intellectual, London is the place. Nowhere else cured a man's vanity or arrogance so well as London; for as no man was either great or good *per se*, but as compared with others not so good or so great, he was sure to find in the metropolis many his equals, and some his superiors."

[1] Mrs. Piozzi writes that Johnson, in speaking of Richardson, said: "You think I love flattery — and so I do; but a little too much always disgusts me. That fellow Richardson, on the contrary, could not be content to sail quietly down the stream of reputation without longing to taste the froth from every stroke of the oar."

Then he would discourse pleasantly on its growing importance and increasing population. Fleet Street had a very animated appearance, yet the full tide of human existence was Charing Cross. "But," he said, "if you wish to have a just notion of the magnitude of this city, you must not be satisfied with seeing its great streets and squares, but must survey the innumerable little lanes and courts. It is not in the showy evolutions of buildings, but in the multiplicity of human habitations which are crowded together that the wonderful immensity of London consists."

Having enjoyed his walk in this shady court, he would take his slow way to the "Temple Exchange Coffee-house," or on a certain night in the week to a club held at the "King's Head Tavern," in Ivy Lane, Paternoster Row, founded by him sixteen years before the famous Literary Club. As he passes along, many a worthy citizen turns and stares at his burly figure; for, "when he walked in the streets, what with the constant roll of his head, and the concomitant motion of his body, he appeared to make his way by that motion, independent of his feet." Moving in his slow fashion, he suddenly pauses, and, in obedience to some superstitious habit, counts a certain number of steps from a certain point; then resumes his solemn march once more, avoiding to tread on the junction of the stones in the pavement, but carefully on the centre, and

laying one hand on every stone-post he passed. The club was formed for the purpose of literary discussion and general relaxation, and could boast such members as the Rev. Doctor Salter, Mr. John Payne, the bookseller, Mr. Samuel Dyer, described as a learned young man, Doctor M'Ghie, a Scotch physician, and Mr. John Hawkins, an attorney. Here he resorted, with a disposition to please and be pleased; making it a rule to talk his best; showing occasionally a versatility of temper at which none took offence, but generally contributing to the mirth of conversation "by the many witty sayings he uttered, and the many excellent stories which his memory had treasured up, and which he would on occasion relate."

And so whilst he is sitting at the club-room table, surrounded by the friends who loved his discourse, forgetful of his struggles in their genial society, enjoying the retort and the laughter which his wit has provoked, shall we take our regretful leave of this most central figure in the great history of our literature.

CHAPTER II.

Charles Macklin and His Tavern — The British Inquisition — Foote's Most Excellent Wit — Macklin's Pupils — Foote as an Actor — The Diversions of the Morning — Drinking a Dish of Chocolate with the Wit — His Mimicry — Young Tate Wilkinson and Peg Woffington — Her Anger and Resentment — The Mimic Mimicked — Wilkinson, Foote, and Garrick — A Night at Drury Lane — The Mirror at Covent Garden — Rich, Foote, Garrick, and Wilkinson.

THE theatrical world and its ways during the last years of Peg Woffington's life afford an interesting, amusing, and not uninstructive study. Poor honest-hearted, whimsical Charles Macklin, whilst yet in the vigour of his life and fulness of his fame, resolved to retreat from the stage, before, as he said, "the powers of acting were weakened by age and infirmity." Accordingly, on December 20, 1753, he took his farewell benefit at Covent Garden in "The Refusal," playing Sir Gilbert Wrangle, Mrs. Macklin, Lady Wrangle, and Miss Macklin, Charlotte; when the unbounded approbation of the audience, as Kirkman narrates, "bear the most ample testimony of their satisfaction and the actor's merit,

they regretting loudly and repeatedly the retirement of their old favourite."

At the conclusion of the play he spoke a farewell epilogue, in which he compared himself to a sailor tossed from shore to shore, sick, wet, and weary, who had resolved to go to sea no more. "Some other schemes, of course, possess my brain," he said, —

> "A scheme I have in hand will make you stare,
> Though off the stage I still must be a player."

He then commended his wife and daughter, who were to remain on the stage, to the favour of the audience; and having spoken his adieu, he bowed profoundly and retired, amidst the universal plaudits of his audience.

He had realised what was in those days considered a handsome fortune, the greater part of which he resolved to lay out in the execution of his scheme, already referred to, — one indeed of many which perpetually beset him with as much persistence as the demons did the good St. Anthony in his desert loneliness, — of establishing a tavern in the piazza of Covent Garden, to which was to be added what he was pleased to describe as "a school of oratory, upon a plan hitherto unknown in England." This school of oratory was to be called "The British Inquisition." As Charles Macklin was no commonplace man, the ordinary which was opened in March, 1745, was

not, as may be supposed, conducted on principles like those which had heretofore regulated such mundane but necessary establishments. He commenced by furnishing his house in a superb manner, and stocking his cellar with the choicest wines. He then hired a vast number of barmaids, cooks, waiters, and servants of all descriptions, whom he personally undertook to train in the way they should go; moreover, he drew up a plan destined to regulate his remarkable ordinary, the rules of which were strictly adhered to whilst it lasted.

Dinner was announced in the daily papers to be ready by four o'clock, and a quarter of an hour before that time each day the whole neighbourhood of Covent Garden was alarmed by the pealing of a great bell affixed to the top of the house, this being a further advertisement, a trifle sensational in its form, that Mr. Macklin's dinner was just about to commence, and that ladies and gentlemen might step in and secure their places. As the clock struck the hour, dinner was laid upon the table; the outer door was then shut, and no other customer was admitted to disturb those already present. Macklin, dressed in a full suit, with stockings rolled over his knees, long flaps to his waistcoat, enormous cuffs, tight stock, and no collar to his coat, brought in the first dish with a slow and stately step that savoured of Hamlet in search of his father's ghost. Then making a low

and gracious bow, that would have done honour to any theatrical potentate, he retired five paces in the direction of the sideboard. Here two of the principal waiters took their places beside him, and posed as ornamental figures during the meal. None of the servants were permitted to speak, save to answer as briefly as possible such questions as the guests addressed to them; and in order to secure perfect uninterruption to the discourse at the table, Macklin's orders were conveyed by a series of signals, which he had taught them for months previous to this wonderfully regulated ordinary. When dinner was over, glasses and bottles were laid upon the table. Then Macklin gravely advanced five paces, bowed low to the company, and expressed his hopes that all things had been found agreeable. After this he passed the bell-rope around the back of the chair of the person sitting at the head of the table, made another low bow, and with calm, stately grace slowly withdrew. The price of this dinner, it may be noted, was three shillings, including port, claret, or such liquor as the customer should choose.

When the ordinary, the etiquette of which savoured so much of the proprietor's former calling, had been established eight months, the "British Inquisition" was opened to the public. The institution, as the originator of the scheme set forth in a wonderfully amusing and most pretentious advertisement, "is upon the plan of the ancient

Greek, Roman, and modern French and Italian societies of liberal investigation. Such subjects in arts, sciences, literature, criticism, philosophy, history, politics, and morality, as shall be found useful and entertaining to society, will be there lectured upon and freely debated; particularly Mr. Macklin intends to lecture upon the comedy of the ancients, the use of their masks and flutes, their mimes and pantomimes, and the use and abuse of the stage. He will likewise lecture upon the rise and progress of the modern theatres, and make a comparison between them and those of Greece and Rome, and between each other. He proposes also to lecture upon each of Shakespeare's plays, to consider the original stories from whence they are taken, the artificial or inartificial use, according to the laws of the drama, that Shakespeare has made of them; his fable, moral character, passions, manners, will likewise be criticised, and how his capital characters have been acted heretofore, are acted, and ought to be acted. And as the design of this inquiry is to endeavour at an acquisition of truth in matters of taste, particularly theatrical, the lecture being ended, any gentleman may offer his thoughts upon the subject.

"The doors will be open at five, and the lecture begin precisely at seven o'clock, every Monday and Friday evening.

"Ladies will be admitted, price one shilling each person.

"The first lecture will be on 'Hamlet.'

"N. B. — The question to be debated after the lecture will be whether the people of Great Britain have profited by their intercourse with, or their imitation of, the French nation.

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"There is a public ordinary every day at four o'clock, price three shillings each person; to drink port, claret, or whatever liquor he shall choose."

Inasmuch that Macklin knew nothing whatsoever of the Greek and Roman stages, or of the Greek and Latin languages, and very little of the French, and was entirely ignorant of the authors from whom Shakespeare drew his plots, which same facts were well known to the town at large, the Inquisition was regarded from the first as nothing more nor less than a burlesque, which the wits and men about town, and coffee-house idlers generally, attended for the purpose of diverting themselves. The burlesque was heightened by the grave airs and complacent egotism of the chief actor, and by the numerous asides and farcical comments which frequently interrupted his discourses. Amongst those who made a point of attending the "Inquisition" was Foote, whose inimitable wit found full play here, and who by his quaint questions, his quick repartee, and the mock gravity of his remarks, threw the lecturer into a flutter of consternation, and the audience into a state of merriment throughout the evening.

Once during Macklin's dissertation on the Greek stage — taken bodily from Dryden's prefaces — the lecturer spoke of some Grecian customs, the origin of which were open to the dispute of the learned; at which point Foote stood up and said, with a solemn face, as he pointed to Macklin's cook:

"Sir, here is a man who has been several times all over grease (Greece) — let us consult him."

"Why, sir," replied the cook, quite innocently, "you make a mistake; I have never been beyond Greenwich in all my life."

"Nay, nay," replied Foote, yet more solemnly; "don't tell a fib, man, I have seen you myself at Spithead."

At which Macklin, as well as the audience, laughed right heartily. Presently, when the lecturer had concluded, a group of friends gathered around him, and the conversation turned on Foote's joke about the cook, and from the cook to the waiters, when one of the pretty fellows complimented Macklin on his manner of directing them by signals.

"Ay, sir," said Macklin, quite triumphantly, "I knew it would do. And where do you think I pitched upon this hint? I pitched upon it from no less a man than James, Duke of York, who you know, sir, first invented signals for the fleet."

"Very *apropos*, indeed," said Foote, quietly, "and good poetical justice; as from the fleet

they were taken — so to the Fleet both master and signals are likely to return."

Another lecture of Macklin's, at which the wit was present, was delivered on the causes of duelling in Ireland, and the reasons why the practice obtained in that nation more than in any other. Beginning at the earliest period of Irish history, and the customs and habits of the Irish people, Macklin slowly prosed down the stream of Hibernian characteristics until he arrived at the reign of Elizabeth, when Foote rose. Macklin stopped, and looking at him, said:

"Well, sir, what have you to say upon the subject?"

"Only to crave a little attention, sir," says the wit, with great modesty, "when I think I can settle this point in a few words."

"Well, sir, go on," cried Macklin, all attention.

"Why, then, sir," said Foote, "what o'clock is it?"

"O'clock," says the lecturer, taken aback. "What has that to do with a dissertation on duelling?" And he drew himself up solemnly.

"Pray, sir," says Foote, "be pleased to answer my question, and you will speedily learn."

Macklin, not without some uneasiness, pulled out his watch, and reported the hour to be half-past ten.

"Very well," says Foote, thoughtfully, "about this time of the night every gentleman in Ireland

that can possibly afford it is on his third bottle of claret, consequently is in a fair way of getting drunk; from drunkenness proceeds quarrelling, and from quarrelling duelling, and so there's an end of the chapter."

The company seemed so satisfied with this abridgement that Macklin walked off his platform, and said no more upon the subject. Indeed, he soon began to detest this man, who with such little seeming offence turned him into ridicule at pleasure; there was no escaping his ready answers, which were tempered with such humour that it was hard to resent them. One night when Macklin was preparing his lecture, he saw his witty tormentor in a corner of the room, surrounded as usual by a group of laughing friends.

"Well, sir," Macklin called out, in an authoritative voice, "you seem to be very merry there; but do you know what I am going to say now?"

"No, sir," says Foote. "Pray *do you?*"

And the crowd laughed louder than before. At times the lecturer would boast of his descent from the kings of Munster; but declared at the same time that he was the first of his name.

"There was no other Macklin before me," he would say, gravely, "for I invented Macklin to get rid of that damned Irish name, McLoughlin."

"But, sir, might not such a name exist without your knowing it?" said a grave dignitary of the Church to him one night.

"No, sir," he answered, with gruff assurance.

"Why, now I think of it," says the churchman, "there was a printer toward the close of the sixteenth century, near Temple Bar, of that name," and he appealed to a friend of his learned in black-letter lore who declared he had several volumes with the name of Macklin at the bottom of the title-page.

"Well, Mr. Macklin, what do you say to that?" asks one of the company.

"Say, sir! Why, all I have to say is this," he replied, stiffly, reluctant to admit he was wrong, "that black-letter men will lie like other men."

Not satisfied with catering for the mental and physical appetites of the public, he undertook to instruct candidates for the stage, who were, after a few lessons, required to give specimens of their various talents for the benefit of the public, in the lecture-room, three times a week. If the wits were pleased with his lectures, they were in transports with these exhibitions; and the raciest stories regarding master and pupils flew about the coffee-houses and taverns. One of the aspirants for dramatic fame, 'twas said, whilst reciting Othello's speech before the Senate, was observed to constantly throw back his left arm with great violence. "Pray, sir," said his tutor, "keep back your left arm a little more; you are now, consider, addressing the Senate, and the right hand is the one to give grace and energy to your enunciation."

"Oh, sir," says the dramatic pupil, "it is only the sleeve of my coat, which I forgot to pin back, as I lost my left arm many years ago on board a man-of war."

Foote used to tell of another aspirant who applied to be instructed in the part of the cock in "Hamlet;" and of a certain individual who wrote to Macklin that he had a great desire to play the parts of Shakespeare's heroines, for which he felt he had a vast amount of ability, that, with some instructions, would take the world by storm.

Delighted at having such a remarkable pupil, Macklin requested the favour of an interview with his correspondent, who turned out to be a blackamoor.

Not satisfied with ridiculing Macklin in his own rooms, Foote conceived the idea of burlesquing him for the greater diversion of the town. He had, years before, in 1744, made his début as an actor, to the infinite disgust of his friends, who were outraged that a man of quality should become a player.

"What," said my Lord Carteret to him, in vast surprise — "what can possess you to go on the stage, and play the fool?"

"The same reason that actuates your lordship to play it off," answered the wit, solemnly.

"Why, what can that be?" asked my lord, not quite seeing the point of the joke.

"Want," replied Foote.

Peg Woffington
Etched by T. Johnson

"Want?" repeated Lord Carteret.

"Yes, want of money makes me play the fool; and want of wit your lordship."

The noble earl in future kept his opinions regarding this new player to himself.

The character in which Foote selected to make his first appearance was that of Othello, a fact affording another proof of the frequency with which men mistake the direction whence their talents lie. His tragedy, though played in all seriousness, was pronounced a masterpiece of burlesque; but it proved inferior in its outrageous extravagance to his subsequent representation of the woe-stricken Hamlet; whilst his Shylock likewise diverted the town, the more so as Kitty Clive played Portia. From tragedy he descended to comedy, and gradually found his level in grotesque mimicry. Accordingly, he, in 1747, opened the little theatre in the Haymarket with a piece he had written for himself, called "The Diversions of the Morning," in which he daringly, and in the wittiest manner possible, mimicked the most prominent characters of the day — such as Sir Thomas de Veil, a Westminster justice; Cock, the celebrated engineer; Orator Hanley, and the actors and actresses of both theatres. The players, one and all, grew furious at being made the laughing-stock of the town, and declared they would be ruined. But Foote was implacable, and made fresh fun from their grumblings. Since, he said

pleasantly enough, that was the case, it was his duty to provide a situation for each lady and gentleman so circumstanced; and that instead of murdering blank verse, and assuming the characters of kings and queens, lords and ladies (for which their abilities were far from being suitable), he would place them where their talents and behaviour could with more propriety be employed.

He therefore, with inimitable wit, gave representations of them in their new occupations. Quin, with his sonorous voice and slow gait, he personated as a watchman crying out "Past twelve o'clock, and a cloudy morning;" Delane, who was supposed to have but one eye, was mimicked as a beggar-man; Ryan, because of his shrill voice, as a razor-grinder, calling out, "Razors to grind, sissars to grind, penknives to grind," and so on. Nay, even the great Garrick was not spared, for Foote, seizing on his habit of hesitation, imitated his dying sentence in the character of Lothario in a manner which convulsed a public, then as now, more appreciative of the ridiculous than the sublime.

The actors were, however, soon to have their revenge. Along with "The Diversions of the Morning," which was merely an entertainment, Foote ventured to play some scenes from Congreve's "Old Bachelor." As the Haymarket was not licensed, this was illegal, and Lacey of Drury

Lane made speedy application to the lord chamberlain to have the performances suppressed; the result of which was, a troop of constables entered the playhouse one night, cleared out the audience, and shut the doors. Foote, however, being a man of resources and courage, was not cast down by this unceremonious treatment.

"He has wit," said Johnson, "and one species of wit in an eminent degree, that of escape. You drive him into a corner with both hands; but he's gone, sir, when you think you have got him — like an animal that jumps over your head. Then he has a great range for wit; he never lets truth stand between him and a jest, and he is sometimes mighty coarse."

Accordingly, on this occasion he jumped over the heads of the authorities in a manner which delighted the town by its readiness. On the very morning following that on which the constables had visited his theatre, he inserted the following notice in the columns of the *General Advertiser*, which astonished and amused the public to a vast degree. "On Saturday afternoon, exactly at twelve o'clock, at the new theatre in the Haymarket, Mr. Foote begs the favour of his friends to come and drink a dish of chocolate with him; and 'tis hoped there will be a great deal of comedy and some joyous spirits. He will endeavour to make the morning as diverting as possible. Tickets to be had for this entertainment at

George's Coffee-house, Temple Bar, without which nobody will be admitted. N. B. — Sir Dilbury Diddle will be there, and Lady Betty Frisk has absolutely promised."

This advertisement was read with delight in a hundred coffee-houses from St. James's to St. Paul's, and laughed over in as many drawing-rooms. The postscript seemed to promise fun to those who were sure of not being burlesqued, and the town was certain of being diverted.

Therefore, before twelve o'clock a most fashionable gathering, which included the Duke of Cumberland, awaited Mr. Foote's appearance in the Haymarket Theatre. The duke had met the wit in Covent Garden that morning, and told him he was going to drink a dish of chocolate with him at midday, when he expected some fun.

"You see," said this stout scion of royalty, "I swallow your good things."

"Do you?" said Foote, slyly. "Why, then, I congratulate your Royal Highness on your digestion, for I believe you never threw one of them up in your life-time."

When the green curtain slowly rose on this memorable morning, Foote came briskly forward, bowed low, and, with a droll twinkle in his eye, said that he was just then preparing some young pupils for the stage, and whilst chocolate was getting ready, he would, with the permission of his audience, proceed with his instructions. With this

preface he began his tuition to imaginary pupils, and gave imitations of actors and others well known to the town, with a wit that was more caustic and unsparing than before. Few prominent persons whose characteristics afforded the slightest scope for mimicry escaped him, Doctor Barrowby, who prided himself on his judgment as a theatrical critic, Doctor Arne, whom he called Doctor Catgut, and Chevalier Taylor, the quack oculist, being especial butts for his mirth. For forty consecutive week-days he drew great crowds; never had any performance been so droll, never had audiences been so merry, for they laughed till the tears rolled down their cheeks. At the expiration of these forty days, it struck Foote that an imitation of Macklin, delivering his rhodomontade with an air of vast wisdom and gravity, would be certain to draw audiences afresh; he therefore gave a quaint and extravagant imitation of the actor, which had the result of filling his coffers to the extent of five hundred pounds, whilst it sent Macklin into the bankruptcy court.

So well were his caricatures received that he conceived the idea of writing plays to suit himself, the leading characters in which should be taken from real life, and exhibited under a veil of disguise so thin that the most short-sighted must perceive the original. The idea no sooner entered into his mind than it was acted upon, and a number of comedies ridiculing well-known men quickly

succeeded each other. Perhaps the most successful of these was "The Author," produced in 1757, in which, under the name of Cadwallader, he mimicked Mr. Ap Rice, a Welsh gentleman familiar to the eyes of the town. Foote was a friend of Mr. Ap Rice, and had, therefore, constant opportunities of studying his portrait from the life.

On the first night of the production of this play the Welsh gentleman was not only present, but, probably through the malicious contrivance of Foote, occupied a stage box, a position which from its prominency gave the audience an excellent chance of comparing the original with the caricature, stout of stomach, foolish of face, awkward of gait, and incoherent of speech. Never had the great mimic come so close to nature, a fact at once recognised by all present, save the victim. Yet none seemed to enjoy the fun more than he, who was in complete ignorance of its cause. But Mr. Ap Rice was not long permitted to remain in that condition which has been described as bliss. Whilst waddling his slow way through the streets he was from this night forward stared and laughed at; whilst, when he entered a coffee-house or tavern, his ears were surprised by the whisper, "There's Cadwallader, there's Cadwallader." Even to this most obtuse Welsh gentleman, it became unendurable; a light suddenly broke in upon his brain, and he sought and obtained protection from the lord chamberlain, who

properly issued an order for the suppression of the play.

Mimicry, indeed, became highly fashionable about this time, and as there is ever a supply ready for a demand in the world of art, so there sprang to the surface of theatrical life in those days a remarkable and highly ingenious youth, who surpassed even Foote himself as a mimic. This was Tate Wilkinson, the son of Doctor Wilkinson, chaplain to the Prince of Wales, and likewise of the Savoy Chapel. Soon after the passing of the marriage act, Doctor Wilkinson was, partly through the instrumentality of David Garrick, tried and sentenced to transportation, for celebrating marriages in the Savoy in defiance of the law. Before the sentence could, however, be carried out, Doctor Wilkinson died, leaving a widow and an only son, Tate. The young gentleman had great powers as a mimic, and burned with a desire of becoming a player. Now the first step necessary to attain this end was an introduction to the great actor-manager of Drury Lane. Accordingly, through the kindness of a friend, he obtained a letter from Lord Mansfield to David Garrick. Duly armed with this epistle, he walked several times up and down Southampton Street, where the famous actor then resided, before he could summon courage to rap at the door of his dwelling, "fearing instant admission might follow," he writes, "or what appeared to me almost as dreadful, if graciously admitted how I should be

able to walk, move, or speak before him." At last he rapped, ascertained that the great man was at home, delivered his letter, and, after a delay of ten minutes, was ushered into his presence.

"Mr. Garrick," Wilkinson writes, "glanced his scrutinising eye first at me, then at the letter, and so alternately. At last — 'Well, sir, — hey? — what, now you are a stage candidate? Well, sir, let me have a taste of your quality.' I, distilled almost to jelly with my fear, attempted a speech from Richard, another from Essex, which he encouraged by observing I was so much frightened that he could not form any judgment of my abilities, but assured me it was not a bad omen, as fear was by no means a sign of want of merit, but often the contrary. We then chatted for a few minutes; and I felt myself more easy, and requested leave to repeat a few speeches in imitation of the then principal stage representatives. 'Nay — now,' says Garrick, 'sir, you must take care of this; for I used to call myself first at this business.' I luckily began with an imitation of Foote. It is difficult here to determine whether Garrick hated or feared Foote the most, sometimes one, sometimes the other was predominant; but from the attention of a few minutes his looks brightened; the glow of his countenance transfused to mine, and he eagerly desired a repetition of the same speech. I was animated; forgot Garrick was present, and spoke at perfect ease.

"'Hey, now, now, what all,' says Garrick. 'How, really — this — this — is — ' (With his usual hesitation and repetition of words.) 'Why — well — well. Do call on me again on Monday at eleven. You may depend upon every assistance in my power. I will see my brother manager, Mr. Lacey, to-day, and let you know the result.'"

On Monday, young Tate Wilkinson "slid up Southampton Street," and was speedily admitted to the presence of the great actor, who addressed him as "young gentleman," told him he had determined to put him on the books at thirty shillings a week for the ensuing season, and requested a repetition of his imitation of Mr. Foote. From this the ingenious youth, who was flattered by the famous actor's attention, proceeded to give a representation of Peg Woffington as Lady Macbeth; for being a clever young gentleman, and knowing the terms on which Garrick had parted with that lady, he had no doubt his efforts in this direction would afford a satisfaction exceeding that enjoyed even by his mimicry of Foote. Indeed, so vastly entertained was Garrick by the lad's imitation of the woman he had once loved, and so boisterous was his laughter, that Wilkinson was obliged to stop.

"I thought it very comical," he writes, "and, that the joke might not be lost, I laughed too; but, on the merriment ceasing, I perceived a concealed third laughter which greatly puzzled me,

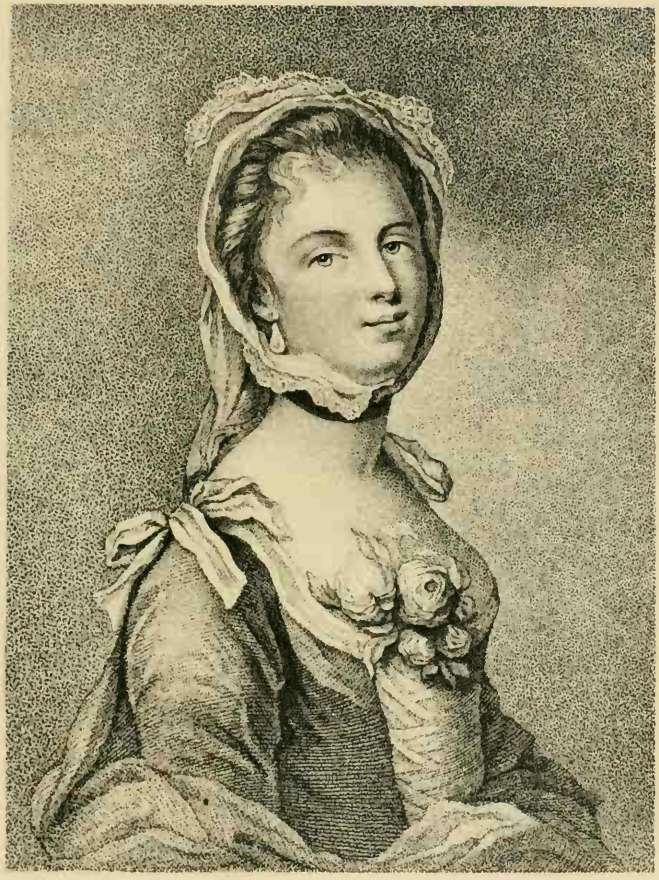
when, on a sudden, a green cloth double door flew open, which I found led to a little breakfast parlour, and discovered a most elegant lady, no less a personage than Mrs. Garrick, who had, it seems, been purposely posted there for her secret opinion of my imitations. Mrs. Garrick apologised for her rudeness and intrusion, confessed she had taken possession of that snug spot, unobserved, at the desire of Mr. Garrick, as from his account of my imitations she expected to be much gratified; but when she heard the tones of Mrs. Woffington, the ridicule was so strongly pointed that it was not in her power to refrain from laughter by the pleasure and great satisfaction she had received."

Tate Wilkinson was delighted by the gratification which his mimicry of the great actress afforded Garrick and his wife; for Peg Woffington, having but a little while before resented a supposed insult from the youth, he was not disposed to regard her with amicable feelings. The cause of the offence happened in this way. One day Tate Wilkinson was asked by his friend, young Captain Forbes, who held a commission in his Majesty's Guards, and was, moreover, son of my Lord Granard, an Irish peer, to dine with him at "The Bedford Arms." When they had eaten and drunk to their full satisfaction, they felt disposed, after the manner of young gentlemen, to make merry.

"Tate," said the captain, "we will go to the play, and I will treat you to the boxes."

Mrs. Garrick

From the painting by Catherin Reid



At this time Wilkinson was well known to Mr. Rich, to whom, indeed, he had presented himself as a candidate for a vacancy in his company. The worthy cat-loving manager, who was unable to speak the king's English without blundering, and who yet cherished the belief in his harlequin's soul that he could win renown as a great tragedian if he but condescended to make a trial of his abilities, undertook to give the young gentleman lessons in elocution, and, what was of more use to him, gave him the *entrée* to his levées and free admission in front of the house. Now when young Captain Forbes went to the playhouse he would sit only in the stage box, where, being in full guard regimentals, he looked a conspicuous figure, and, "being jolly with the bottle," he drew considerable attention to himself and his friend.

Some of the players, seeing Wilkinson in a stage box, and believing he had installed himself there without payment, were indignant at what they considered his impudent bravado, and spoke to Rich, who sent a messenger to order him from his "improper situation." Captain Forbes soon convinced the servant of his mistake, and sent back word that Mr. Wilkinson was seated there by proper authority. It happened that Peg Woffington, who was playing Clarissa in "The Confederacy," was on the stage at the moment the box-keeper received his answer, and, having heard that a young gentleman named Wilkinson was in the

habit of mimicking her, she approached the box, looked at him in a manner that made him shrink back, and finished her speech in a sarcastic manner.

"My unfortunate star sure was then predominant," says Wilkinson, speaking of this night, "for at that moment a woman of the town, in the balcony above where I was seated, repeated some words in a remarkably shrill tone, which occasioned a general laugh; like electricity it caught Mrs. Woffington's ear, whose voice was far from being enchanting. On perceiving the pipe squeak on her right hand, and being conscious of the insult she had then given apparently to me, it struck her comprehension so forcibly that she immediately concluded I had given the retort upon her in that open and audacious manner. She again turned and darted her lovely eyes, though assisted by the furies, which made me look confounded and sheepish; all which only served to confirm my condemnation."

The next day he attended Rich's levee, and was kept waiting in an outer room for a considerable time, when at last Peg Woffington — who was a woman in all things, and resented, with right feminine indignation, the insult which she believed he had given her — swept through the apartment without a word, curtsey, or even an inclination of her head, and proceeded to her sedan; from which, acting on second thoughts,

she hastily returned, and, advancing toward the youth with queenlike steps and eyes that flashed with resentment, said, "Mr. Wilkinson, I have made a visit this morning to Mr. Rich, to insist on his not giving you any engagement whatever. Your impudence to me last night, where you had with such assurance placed yourself, is one proof of your ignorance; added to that, I heard you echo my voice when I was acting, and I sincerely hope, in whatever barn you are suffered as an unworthy stroller, that you will fully experience the same contempt you dared last night to offer me."

"Without waiting or permitting me to reply," says Wilkinson, "she darted once more to her chair. I really was so astonished, frightened, and bewildered that I knew not how to act or think."

When he saw the manager later on, that worthy said to him, "Muster Whittington, you are unfit for the stage, and I won't larn you — you may go, Mr. Whittington. And," adds Wilkinson, "he stroked his favourite cat."

This burst of indignation showered on the head of a saucy young jackanapes whom Peg Woffington believed had openly insulted her, and who was, no doubt, more guilty than he confessed, lasted but a little while; and when next he mentions her name he speaks of her manner softening toward him. Her heart was far too large and generous, her nature too genial, to harbour petty revenge.

Tate Wilkinson was indeed a precocious youth,

who soon became vastly proud of his imitations, which, he says somewhat egotistically, "when really produced upon the stage, were thought superior to Mr. Garrick's or Mr. Foote's. For those particular actors or actresses whose manner and voice I so strongly presented to the public were taken on the truest ground, — that of feeling myself at the time the person I imitated, and not exaggerated into buffoonery; and this was my work, my toil, my constant practice for some years before I played in London. I had so habituated myself to this fluctuation of voice, and to move and change my features to those of the actors and actresses I judged myself personating, that from impulsive enthusiasm — for I cannot think of another word — I felt as if each individual I spoke and acted like were at that instant under the restrictions and reverence due to a real audience of the most collected and fashionable consequence."

His love for approbation, indeed, outgrew his discretion; for presently we find him mimicking not only Peg Woffington, but the greatest lights of the stage, to their very faces. The first actor whom he selected to favour with a personation which held the mirror up to nature was Foote, who had heretofore been considered unapproachable in this line, and was, as a consequence, dreaded, not only by those of his own profession, but by all men of distinction, who lived in daily

and hourly apprehension of being held up to public laughter by the famous wit. Yet, as it so often happens with those who delight in imitating and burlesquing the marked characteristics of their friends, the mimic's own peculiarities were, we are assured, "more extravagant than any person's whose gait, or gesture, or history he might choose to record or divert himself with."

It happened when Samuel Foote was going to fulfil an engagement in Dublin, he told young Wilkinson — to whom he had been introduced by Garrick — he would be very glad of his company, to help to divert the town; and that he would "fix him on genteel terms" with Sheridan. This proposal Wilkinson, whose engagement with Garrick had not yet begun, avows, "was a cheering cordial elixir to my drooping spirits, and to my still more drooping pockets." He therefore accompanied Foote to the Irish capital; where the great wit and mimic was about to give his entertainment called "Tea," in which he appeared as Mr. Puzzle, the instructor; and Wilkinson, or as it was announced upon the bills, "A young gentleman who never appeared on any stage before," as his "first pupil." For this performance there was no rehearsal, it being arranged that Wilkinson should appear when called upon, and give such imitations of well-known characters as pleased him best. At eight o'clock on this evening, when he was to make his first bow to the public, he was in full

dress behind the scenes. The company were all strangers to him, and were not prepared to receive him with much civility; for if he were a blockhead, he was not worth their notice; and if an impudent mimic, bred by Foote in his worthy art, he was certainly a despicable intruder. Therefore, feeling his company was not desirable, he left the solitary seat in the greenroom, and went on to the stage, when looking through a hole in the curtain, he beheld a crowded and most splendid audience, such as, he says, "might strike the boldest with dismay." This assembly looked forward with some curiosity to the first appearance of a young gentleman whose talents as a mimic, and whose position as the son of a clergyman on whom sentence of transportation had been pronounced, had become topics of general conversation in the city.

Presently the farce began, and Foote gained great applause and created roars of laughter. "In the second act my time of trial drew near," writes the younger mimic; "in about ten minutes I was called,— 'Mr. Wilkinson, Mr. Wilkinson.' Had I obeyed a natural impulse, I was really so alarmed that I should have run away. But honour pricked me on, there was no alternative, my brain was a chaos; but on I went. I must have made a very timid, sheepish appearance. I trembled like a frightened clown in a pantomime, which, Foote, perceiving, good-naturedly took me by the hand

and led me forward, when the burst of applause was wonderful; but it could not instantly remove my timidity, and I had no prompter to trust to, as all depended on myself. Foote, perceiving I was not fit for action, said, 'This young gentleman is merely a novice on the stage, he has not been properly drilled. But come, my young friend, walk across the stage; breathe yourself and show your figure.' I did so, the walk encouraged me, and another loud applause succeeded. I felt a glow which seemed to say, 'What have you to fear? Now or never. This is the night that either makes you or undoes you quite.' I mustered up courage, and began with the imitation of Mr. Sparks. The audience were struck with the forcible manner of the speaking and the striking resemblance of the features, a particular excellence in my mode of mimicry. The applause resounded even to my astonishment, and the audience were equally amazed, as they found something where they, in fact, expected nothing. Next speech was Barry in Alexander. I now found myself vastly elated and clever; fear was vanished, and joy and pleasure succeeded, — a proof what barometers we are, how soon elated, how soon depressed. When quite at ease, I began with Mrs. Woffington in Lady Macbeth, and Barry in Macbeth. The laughter was so loud and incessant that I could not proceed. This was a minute of luxury; I was then in the regions of bliss; I was encored. A

sudden thought occurred, I felt all hardy, all alert, all nerve, and immediately advanced six steps, and before I spoke, I received the full testimony of true imitation. My master, as he was called, sat on the stage at the same time; I repeated twelve or fourteen lines of the very prologue he had spoken that night. I, before Mr. Foote, presented his other self. His manner, his voice, his oddities, I so exactly hit that the pleasure, the glee it gave, may easily be conceived to see and hear the mimic mimicked, and it really gave me a complete victory over Mr. Foote, for the suddenness of the action tripped up his audacity so much that he, with all his effrontery, sat foolish, wishing to appear equally pleased with the audience, but knew not how to play the difficult part. He was unprepared, the surprise and satisfaction was such that, without any conclusion, the curtain was obliged to drop with reiterated bursts of applause."

At this piece of audacity Foote was vastly piqued and chagrined. But he who had so unsparingly ridiculed his friends and foes alike, whether in the pulpit, or on the stage, or at the bar, dare not openly complain of now meeting with treatment like unto theirs. He therefore sought to conceal his feelings, and merely remarked to Wilkinson that this was decidedly his worst imitation. At the end of six weeks Foote was obliged to leave Dublin, to fulfil a London engagement, and Wilkinson was left behind in the enjoyment of a salary

of three guineas a week from Sheridan. For a couple of months he continued to delight the town, and drew crowded houses, much to Sheridan's satisfaction. Now in order to give more variety to the entertainment, Sheridan, when Wilkinson called on him at his own house one night, suggested that, instead of mimicking the London actors and actresses as he had done, he would exhibit the manners of the players then engaged in his company. This Wilkinson refused, urging that his mimicry would so incense the performers that they would insult him, and refuse to play for him when his benefit came around. But these considerations had no influence with Sheridan, who repeated the request more eagerly, and was vexed at its being declined. Wilkinson then hit on what he considered a bright idea.

"My dear sir," said he to the manager, in a confidential tone, "a thought has just entered my head, which I think will draw money and be of infinite service to myself." Sheridan asked him, with the utmost eagerness, what it was. "Why, sir," said the precocious youth, "your rank in the theatre, and a gentleman so well known in Dublin on and off the stage, must naturally occasion any striking imitation of yourself to have a wonderful effect. I have paid great attention to your whole mode of acting, not only since I have come here, but when you played the whole season at Covent Garden Theatre, and actually think I can do a

great deal on your stage with you alone, without interfering with any other actor's manner whatever."

The effect of this suggestion on Sheridan was marvellous. "Hogarth's pencil could not testify more astonishment," says Wilkinson. "He turned pale and red alternately, his lips quivered; I instantaneously saw I was in the wrong box. It was some time before he could speak; he took a candle from off the table, and showing me the room door — when at last his words found utterance — said he never was so insulted. What, to be taken off by a buffoon upon his own stage. And as to mimicry, what is it? Why, a proceeding which he never could countenance; that he even despised Garrick and Foote for introducing so mean an art; and he then very politely desired me to walk down-stairs. I was obliged to march, and really felt petrified with my bright thought, which had turned out so contrary from what I had ignorantly expected. Mr. Sheridan held the candle for me only till I got to the first landing, and then hastily removed it, grumbling and squeaking to himself, and leaving me to feel my way in the dark down a pair and a half of steep stairs, and to guess my road, in hopes of finding the street door."

But even this experience did not serve to teach Wilkinson that imitation is not always the sincerest flattery. The next actor whom he gave an

imitation of before his face was Garrick, whom, the young mimic admits, "certainly was the most universal great actor the world ever produced." On his return to England, Wilkinson played in the provinces, and was engaged subsequently to appear as one of the Drury Lane company, for the season commencing September, 1758; though on what date, or in what character, it did not please Mr. Garrick to inform him. One day, whilst he was yet in suspense as to his appearance on the stage of Drury Lane, he was walking down James Street, when he heard a voice call after him repeatedly. Turning around, he saw Foote, whom he had not met since his return from Ireland. The elder mimic greeted him cordially; "and sure," says Wilkinson, "if ever one person possessed the talents of pleasing more than another, Mr. Foote was certainly the man." Away he went with Foote to dinner, for the wit, whenever he had money, kept an open table, loved good company, and drank excellent wine. When they had dined, as pleasantly as might be, and the claret was circulating, Foote informed him he was to play at Drury Lane in a short time, and then expressed his anxiety as to what Wilkinson had been doing since last they met; whereon the youth told him his story, which he ended by stating he had signed an agreement to join Garrick's company, but that gentleman would not tell him in what part he was to play.

Hearing which, Foote, who had as little love for Garrick as Garrick entertained for him, replied, "You must, Wilkinson, plainly see, and be convinced, that dirty hound Garrick does not mean to do you any service, or wish you any success; but on the contrary, he is a secret enemy, and if he can prevent your doing well, be assured he will. I know his heart so well, that if you give me permission to ask for your first attempt on his stage to be in my piece, the hound will certainly refuse the moment I mention it. And though his little soul would rejoice to act Richard the Third in the dog-days, before the hottest kitchen fire for a sop in the pan, yet I know his mean soul so perfectly, that if, on his refusal, I with a grave face tell him I have his figure exactly made and dressed as a puppet in my closet, ready for public admiration, the fellow will not only consent to your acting, but what is more extraordinary, his abject fears will make him lend me money, if I should say I want it."

Wilkinson readily agreeing to Foote's proposal that they should both play in the same piece, Garrick, who greatly feared the wit, gave his consent to the arrangement; and in due time, the "Diversions of the Morning" was performed at Drury Lane Theatre; the principal characters by Mr. Foote and Mr. Wilkinson. The diversions were caused by the instructions of Mr. Puzzle to his pupils in the art of acting, or in other words,

of mimicry. Now amongst those who suffered most from the efforts of this master and his pupil were the Covent Garden players, who were considered fair game for their scathing ridicule. Amongst them was one in particular, an actor named Sparks, whose mannerisms had served as an excellent butt for Wilkinson when he played in Dublin, and now vastly delighted London town. It was one day said that Sparks was so hurt by the mimicry that he had taken to his bed, and was dangerously ill ; a report that Foote contradicted, for he declared he had met Mrs. Sparks going home with two pounds of mutton-chops on a skewer for her husband's dinner.

Sparks was, however, mightily hurt by this ridicule, and waited on Garrick to protest against such unhandsome usage, and request that the great Mr. Garrick would not suffer him, as a man of credit in private life, and an actor of estimation in public, to be destroyed by such an illiberal attack on his livelihood.

"Why, now — hey, Sparks," said Garrick, with his usual hesitation, said to be the result of affectation, and a fear of being led into promises which he never meant to perform. "Why, Wilkinson — and be damned to him — they say he takes me off, and he takes Foote off — and so, you see you are in very good company."

"Very true, sir," said Sparks, bluntly, "but many an honest man has been ruined by keep-

ing too good company;" saying which, he at once took his departure.

At noon, Garrick went to Drury Lane, paraded up and down the stage in seeming agitation, called all his actors around him, and then sent for Wilkinson, whom he rated soundly, pretending to have the greatest abhorrence of an art which he had practised at the outset of his career to the indignation of many.

"Now, hey, damn it, Wilkinson," said he, "why will you take a liberty with these gentlemen, the players, and without my consent? You never consulted or told me who you were to take off, as you call it. Hey, now, that is, I say — but you and Foote, and Foote and you, think you are managers of this theatre. But to convince you of the contrary — and be damned to ye — I here order you, before these gentlemen, to desist from taking any liberty with any one of Covent Garden Theatre. I do not allow myself such unbecoming liberties, nor will I permit them from another, where I am manager; and if you dare to repeat such a mode of conduct after my commands, I will fine you the penalty of your article."

To this speech, which was merely intended for the benefit of the company, Kitty Clive must join her voice.

"Fie, fie, young man, fie, fie," said Kitty; adding that it was impudent and shocking for a young fellow to gain applause at the expense of

the players. "Now," said she, "I can, and do myself take off, but then it is only the Mingotti, and a set of Italian squalling devils who come over to England to get our bread from us; and I say curse them all for a set of Italian hounds."

Presently in came Foote, singing a snatch of a French song "to show his good breeding;" on which Garrick laid bare the matter before him, and told him that from motives of humanity and consideration he was resolved to put a stop to Wilkinson's proceedings. "If, indeed now," said the liberal manager, "he could have taken me off; why, now, as to that, I should have liked it vastly, and so would Mrs. Garrick;" but he insisted that the Covent Garden players should be let alone. To the great surprise of Wilkinson, who was not familiar with the ways of managers, Foote seconded all Garrick had said, and the young mimic was much cast down. Therefore, when night came, he prepared to act only the part of Bounce in the farce, without giving any imitations. But when this was finished, there was a great call for the mimicry with which he usually had favoured the house, Garrick and Foote having planted many people in the theatre for the purpose.

The clamour continuing, Garrick ordered the lights to be let down, "which consisted of six chandeliers hanging over the stage, every one containing twelve candles in brass sockets, and

a heavy iron, flourished and joined to each bottom, large enough for a street palisade. This ceremony being complied with, Mr. Garrick said it would, with the lamps also lowered, be a convincing proof to the audience that all was over." They, however, refused to stir, but called louder than before for Wilkinson, and caused a great tumult. Then Foote, who had been standing at perfect ease at the wings, enjoying the sport, came forward and made a vastly polite speech. He was exceedingly sorry to have given cause for any disturbance. He begged to assure them that Mr. Wilkinson's performance had been introduced by way of entertainment, and not with intentions to injure any individual whatever. Indeed, a harmless laugh was all to which the young gentleman had aspired. Mr. Wilkinson had desired him to remit his grateful acknowledgments for the kind indulgence with which they had honoured him, and regretted that what had been intended to divert had been misconstrued into wickedness. For Mr. Garrick and he, Mr. Foote, had received remonstrances and cruel reflections from certain performers, who alleged that they suffered in their reputations from the imitations. Therefore Mr. Garrick and himself had, from motives of generosity, yielded to such importunity and allegations, and had cheerfully sacrificed that part of the entertainment, for the sake of affording peace and happiness to others, an act which he trusted would meet with the

approbation of the audience, whose favour it would ever be their study to merit and obtain.

This pretty speech was treated with anger and contempt; the audience were not to be denied their diversions for the sake of the tender feelings of any player; and therefore called aloud, again and again, for Wilkinson. Foote now rushed into the greenroom, and told Wilkinson he must immediately go on the stage.

"And what must I do when I am there?" said the youth, who felt completely bewildered.

"Anything," replied Foote. "Do what you like; and treat them to as much of me as you please, only come on at once."

"What does Mr. Garrick say?" asked the mimic. "For without his orders I cannot proceed," and he turned to the manager.

"Hey, why, now, hey," said Garrick. "Why now, as they insist, I really do not see that I am bound to run the hazard of having a riot in my theatre to please Sparks and the rest of the Covent Garden people; and if they are not satisfied with your serving up Mr. Foote as a dish, why, it is a pity — as I to-day observed — but you could give me. But that, you say, is not possible, with any hopes of success. Why, now, haste, they are making a devilish noise; and so as you have begun your damned taking off, why go on with it, and do what comes into your head; and do not plague me with your cursed tricks again."

Wilkinson took him at his word; went on the stage, and after mimicking Foote, next proceeded to give a representation of the great Mr. Garrick. The audience were at first vastly surprised, then immensely tickled, and finally so delighted that they filled the house with loud acclamations. Garrick was terribly astonished, and being ever sensitive to the slightest ridicule, was highly incensed, so much so, indeed, that for the remainder of the season "he never deigned," says Wilkinson, "to let his eye grace me with its observance, and of course not a single word ever came to comfort me from his royal lips; all conveyed, whenever I met him, austerity, anger and dislike." But Tate Wilkinson's imitations of Foote and Garrick by no means ended here. Indeed, these actors — who by their mimicry had been for years the plague of numbers and the dread of each other — now, by a just judgment, looked with fear and trembling on this youth who was capable of holding them up to the laughter of the town. When Wilkinson's engagement terminated at the Drury Lane, Garrick was by no means anxious to renew it, and the mimic went adventuring in the provinces, where he met with great success. But presently being at Winchester, he "steered once more for dear London, to see what was going on in the great world."

On the morning of his departure from Winchester, he received a present of a hamper containing

Bury pears and other fruits, from my Lord Tavistock, an admirer of his talents, and a kindly nobleman withal. When the clever youth arrived in town, he brought a fine hare, and adding it to the hamper, sent them to Rich as a genteel present worthy of his acceptance. The worthy manager was flattered by this attention, and in return invited Wilkinson to dine with him, a favour he declined, but he subsequently presented himself at one of the great harlequin's morning levees. Rich received him with a vast show of civility, and expressed himself delighted with the success the young fellow had recently achieved.

"Why, Muster Williamskin," said he, it being one of this eccentric man's peculiarities to mispronounce all surnames, "you are much improved since I first began to *larn* you. I think I must engage you. Name your own terms."

An agreement was promptly arrived at, and Wilkinson proposed that "The Minor" should be placed on the Covent Garden stage. This was a three-act farce, written by Foote, in which the author had mimicked Whitfield, the preacher, Langford, the auctioneer, and a certain lady known to the gay part of the town as Mother Douglas. Wilkinson of course determined to give such representations of Foote as would set the whole town in a roar. To this proposition Rich at once consented, and requested Wilkinson to cast the parts; on which the latter selected Sparks to play

Richard Wealthy, a prominent character. Now this actor, remembering how he had been mimicked at Drury Lane, declared he was by no means willing "to perform, or assist in any piece for the advantage of a villain who, unprovoked, had endeavoured to hurt him in his peace of mind, and injure his reputation as an actor with the public."

These were wrathful words indeed; but Wilkinson was resolved to appease the man who had uttered them. He therefore explained that it was by the artifices of Foote and Garrick he had been forced to give such imitations at Drury Lane; and that during his engagement at Covent Garden he had no intention of mimicking any actors but Foote and Garrick, whose treatment of him, he considered, justified his resolution. On hearing this, Sparks became pacified; and as he, in common with many others, cherished an old grudge against these mimics, whom he accused of meanness and ingratitude, he accepted the part for which he was cast, and promised Wilkinson every assistance in his power. The farce was, accordingly, put in rehearsal, and all went well until the rumour of their intentions reached Foote's ears, when it caused him the greatest possible alarm.

He who had spared neither friend nor foe, neither host nor guest, shrank from the ridicule which now threatened him, and determined to

protest against it with might and main. So it happened one morning, whilst Rich, Wilkinson, and Sparks were holding a council of war in the manager's house, that a thundering rap at the door made them jump from their seats, whilst the bell rang in the most alarming manner imaginable. Immediately after a servant entered the room where they three sat, saying Mr. Foote had come to wait on Mr. Rich. The manager went down to his visitor, who greeted his appearance with a storm of abuse.

"Damn it, you old hound," he shouted vigorously, "if you dare let Wilkinson, that pug-nosed dog, take any liberty with me as to mimicry, I will bring you yourself, Rich, on the stage. If you want to engage that pug, black his face, and let him hand a teakettle in a pantomime. If he dares to appear in my character in 'The Minor,' I will instantly produce your old stupid, ridiculous self, with your cats and your hound of a mimic, altogether, next week at Drury Lane, for the general diversion of the pit, boxes, and galleries; and that will be paying you, you squinting old Hecate, too great a compliment." Saying which, the great mimic darted out of the house in a violent passion.

When he had departed, Rich went back to his friends with a most woful countenance. "Why, Muster Sparkish," said he, disconsolately, "Muster Footeye has declared, if I let Muster Williamskin

act his parts or mimic him on the stage, he will write parts for me, my cats, and Muster Williamskin, and bring us all out at Drury Lane. So we must not act what we intended." To which Sparks made reply, "Why, surely, sir," said he, "you cannot be so weak as to let Mr. Foote's vapouring visit frighten you from your purpose, or intimidate you from having a piece acted that may be of service to your theatre, and to this young gentleman."

Rich was yet frightened, and Sparks went on to say it was truly strange and laughable that Foote, of all people, should confess himself mortified at the prospect of being mimicked, he who had been for years "an universal torturer and spoiler of private peace, from licentious liberties he had taken."

Rich was, however, still apprehensive of Foote. "I believe," says Wilkinson, "he dreaded an affront on his favourite cat more than on himself." In due time, however, he consented to the production of "The Minor," and a brilliant and crowded audience assembled to see Wilkinson's imitations. He mimicked Foote "from top to toe," as he tells us; "and as to Mr. Garrick, I made no scruple." One night Garrick sat in one of the boxes of Covent Garden Theatre to see his counterfeit presentment, drawn thither by curiosity, or by a desire to appear indifferent to ridicule. Presently, when the young jackanapes recited some lines from Macbeth in

the manner of the great actor, the cry, "Garrick, 'tis Garrick," rang through the house.

"From that night," says Wilkinson, "he never forgave nor forgot, nor did he ever speak to me again to the day of his death."

CHAPTER III.

Spranger Barry — His Début in Dublin — Arrival in London — His Personal Beauty and Sweetness of Voice — Plays at Drury Lane — His Personation of Othello — Dissatisfied with Garrick — Goes to Covent Garden — The Rival Romeos — The Rival Juliets — Excitement of the Town — Tragedies Produced by Garrick — Monsieur Jean Noverre — The Chinese Festival — George II. at the Playhouse — His Impressions of Richard III. — Riot at Drury Lane.

EANWHILE Garrick continued to attract and delight the town, constantly affording his audiences variety by the introduction of tragedies and comedies selected from old, or accepted from contemporary authors. But with all his careful management, inimitable acting, and great reputation, he was not without a rival, who at one time threatened to deprive the great theatrical monarch of his throne.

This was Spranger Barry, the descendant of an old Irish family, and the son of a Dublin silversmith. He himself had, indeed, been for some time engaged in that trade, which was as uncongenial to his tastes as it was unprofitable to his pocket. All his desires tending toward the stage, which his fine physical gifts were calculated to

adorn, he became an actor at the age of four and twenty, and made his début as Othello at Smock Alley Theatre in the winter of 1743. He literally fascinated the town, as much by his singularly handsome presence and the rare sweetness of his voice, as by the force of his acting. In a little while the noise of his reputation crossed the channel, and three years from the date of his first appearance he was engaged by Lacey to play at Drury Lane. On his arrival in London, Charles Macklin extended the hand of friendship to his young countryman, gave him some lessons in elocution, and showed him the curiosities of the town. Walking with his mentor in St. James's Park, Barry's agreeable presence attracted universal attention; and on Macklin being asked who his companion was, he replied, with a twinkle in his eye, "Why, it's a young Irish nobleman — the Earl of Munster." The story was believed, and when Barry made his bow in Drury Lane, half his audience were convinced an Irish peer had turned player. The sensation he had made in Dublin was surpassed by that which he created in the greater capital; according to Murphy, he "blazed out" upon the stage, and "gave delight to the metropolis." Few actors had gained such an enthusiastic reception. Full six feet high, commanding in figure, of an aristocratic bearing, Barry was considered the perfection of physical beauty; whilst his voice, clear and singularly

musical, gained him the title of "the silver-tongued," for as Rich said, "he could wheedle a bird off a tree." Murphy bears testimony that he was "certainly one of the handsomest men in Europe;" whilst it is again affirmed of him and Peg Woffington "that for mere human beauty they have never been surpassed."

Though Barry eschewed that deep study and patient care which enabled Garrick to bring his gifts to maturity, yet by reason of his great sensibility and natural tact, he was perhaps the more effective player. Barry felt the force and pathos of every line he spoke; Garrick could, on leaving an audience bathed in tears, make jokes at the wings which convulsed his hearers with laughter. The whole town was enthusiastic concerning this new actor. Garrick freely acknowledged him "the best lover upon the stage;" whilst Davies adds his opinion that "in scenes of love, tenderness, and all the mingled passions of the soul," he was not inferior to the great Montford. Amongst those who witnessed him play Othello on the night of his first appearance at Drury Lane was old Colley Cibber, who afterward went about declaring that this young man's Othello was superior to the immortal Betterton's; and no higher meed of praise could he bestow.

His performance of this character was indeed remarkable; Kirkman says it was "amazingly great, for he rose through all the passions of

this character to the utmost extent of central imagination." The public had seen Quin, with his clumsy figure and heavy declamation, play this part in a big powdered wig, and with a black face, which made "such a magpie appearance of his head" as tended more to produce laughter than tears. Garrick had also played the Moor, but had not succeeded in the part to his satisfaction or that of his friends. He had as Othello worn a Moorish dress, which served to make his figure smaller than it really was. After witnessing the play one night, a friend of Quin's hastened to describe Garrick's personation to the sturdy old actor.

"Why, you must be mistaken, my dear sir," said Quin, when he had heard him; "the little man could not appear as the Moor; he must rather have looked like Desdemona's little black boy that attends her teakettle."

Now, however, when Barry played Othello the town paid him the highest compliment possible, by stating that it recognised, for the first time, the probability of Desdemona falling in love with such a Moor as he represented.

"In Othello," says Arthur Murphy, "he was master of the quick vicissitudes of love, of grief, of rage, and tenderness; and in the conflict, or, as Shakespeare has it, in the tempest and whirlwind of the passions, his voice was harmony in an uproar." So realistic, indeed, was his passion, so

expressive his jealousy, that when he delivered the line, "I'll tear her all to pieces," many women screamed with terror; whilst the last scene, in which Desdemona is done to death, made the whole house shudder.

In some other personations he was almost, if not equally, successful. Garrick, having once seen him play Orestes, never after attempted that part in London. His Alexander was pronounced inimitable, and his Romeo, the perfection of love-making. In most of the characters he personated he was indeed successful. "All exquisitely tender or touching writing," says an anonymous contemporary critic, "came mended from his mouth. There was a pathos, a sweetness, a delicacy in his utterance which stole upon the mind, and forced conviction on the memory. Every sentiment of honour and virtue, recommended to the ear by the language of the author, was riveted to the heart by the utterance of Barry."

In private life he was scarcely less lauded than in public. He was caressed for his beauty by women of quality, sought after for his conviviality by men of distinction, and courted for the excellency of his parts by society in general. In return, he entertained the town with a magnificence which, if suited to his elegant manners and superb tastes, far outstripped his income. As an instance of his extravagance and love of ostentation, it may be mentioned that when his friend, Henry Pelham,

the prime minister, invited himself to sup with him, Barry entertained him with a princely banquet. "I could not have given a more splendid supper myself," said the minister, by no means pleased with the profusion; and he never sat at the actor's table again. To crown all, Frederick, Prince of Wales, honoured him with his patronage, and advised him to take lessons in dancing from his favourite Desnoyers, by way of gaining additional ease and grace in his movements; and Barry judiciously complying with the hint, the prince at once extended his friendship to the great actor.

Such triumphs, so freely awarded, both socially and professionally, might have undone the wisest man. They served after a short time to make Barry, if not jealous of Garrick as a rival, at least dissatisfied with him as a manager; and he therefore left Drury Lane. According to Boaden, the new actor "began to grow spoiled by success, and was frequently absent from his duty under the plea of bad health. He assured the public, by advertisement, that 'he scorned all trick and evasion, and that nothing but real illness had, or should ever, oblige him to decline his duty as an actor.' He, however, could no longer bear to be second, where it was yet impossible he should be first. Barry complained that he was called upon to act at improper seasons and on unlucky days; such as when a woman of quality had sum-

moned a prodigious company to a concert of music or a rout, or upon an opera night, or when some public assembly was announced, which prevented his having a good audience. Then Garrick, according to Davies, desired him to choose his own days. 'Very well,' said Barry, 'this is all I can ask.' But even that compliance," says Garrick's biographer, "did not produce the desired effect. Garrick's Hamlet still drew greater crowds than Barry's; but this, indeed, was a misfortune which Garrick was not anxious to remove." Charles Macklin, in speaking of Barry's departure from the Drury Lane company, speaks of it as "one of those revolutions which take place in theatrical affairs," and adds that "Barry, disgusted with being under the control of a rival, — who certainly had it in his power not to show him fair play, — revolted to Rich." Moreover, Mrs. Cibber, who had, since the departure of Peg Woffington, played the principal female parts at Drury Lane, likewise rebelled, and went over to the opposition playhouse.

Accordingly, when the theatrical season of 1750 began, the two great rivals divided the attention and favour of the town; and it was plain to all they were prepared for deadly combat. Garrick was in himself a tower of strength, and could boast a company which included Mrs. Pritchard, Kitty Clive, and Woodward, three excellent players, together with George Anne Bellamy, whom

he had selected to replace Mrs. Cibber, for which purpose he had given her an excellent training during the previous summer months. Rich, on the other hand, numbered not only Barry, but Peg Woffington, Mrs. Cibber, Quin, and Macklin among his troupe, a prodigiously strong body withal.

On the 8th of September, Garrick opened Drury Lane with "The Merchant of Venice;" when "an occasional prologue," by the manager, was spoken by Kitty Clive. In this he struck the key-note of the feelings which actuated both houses:

"Strengthed by new allies, our foes prepare,
'Cry havock, and let slip the dogs of war.'
To shake our souls, the papers of the day
Draw forth the adverse bands in dread array;
A power might shake the boldest with dismay.
Yet, fearless still, we take the field with spirit,
Armed cap-a-pie, in self-sufficient merit."

On the 24th of the same month, Covent Garden began its season, with Macklin in "The Miser." Four nights later the grand battle was begun, when "Romeo and Juliet" was announced for performance at both houses.

Romeo was Barry's favourite character, and as Juliet Mrs. Cibber most excelled. They had both been carefully trained by Garrick in their respective parts as the hero and heroine of this tragedy, which when acted by them during the previous season at the Lane had drawn large and appre-

ciative audiences. The play was therefore regarded by Barry as his trump card, which he now, eagerly and with a certainty of success, flung down in the face of his great rival. Garrick, however, was not taken unawares. Anticipating this challenge, he had secretly prepared for it; had carefully studied Romeo, and instructed Miss Bellamy in the part of Juliet, and was therefore ready and willing to accept this open contest. Accordingly, on the first announcement of the performance of the tragedy at Rich's theatre, he likewise advertised it for the same night at Drury Lane. The Covent Garden bill promised much, and ran as follows:

BY THE COMPANY OF COMEDIANS.

AT THE THEATRE ROYAL IN COVENT GARDEN.

To-morrow, September 28, will be presented a Play, call'd

ROMEO AND JULIET.

The Part of ROMEO to be performed by Mr. BARRY.
(Being the first time of his appearing on that stage.)
And the Part of JULIET to be performed by Mrs. CIBBER.
An additional scene will be introduced, representing

THE FUNERAL PROCESSION OF JULIET.

Which will be accompanied with a solemn DIRGE never performed before, and set to music by Mr. Arne,
With the proper Decorations incident to the Play.
Boxes, 5*s.*; Pit, 3*s.*; First Gallery, 2*s.*; Upper Gallery, 1*s.*
To begin exactly at six o'clock.

Rich, who delighted in theatrical displays, was resolved that the funeral procession should take the town. Garrick, though too shrewd a manager to neglect such an attraction, made no mention of it, but let it come as a surprise to his audience. The Drury Lane bill was as follows :

BY HIS MAJESTY'S COMPANY OF COMEDIANS.

AT THE THEATRE ROYAL IN DRURY LANE.

This day, September 28, will be revived a Play, call'd

ROMEO AND JULIET.

The Part of ROMEO to be performed by Mr. GARRICK.
(*Being the first time of his appearing in that character.*)
The Part of MERCUTIO by Mr. WOODWARD,
And the Part of JULIET to be performed by Miss BELLAMY.
(Being the first time of her appearing on that stage.)
With proper Decorations.
Boxes, 5*s.*; Pit, 3*s.*; Gallery, 2*s.*; Upper Gallery, 1*s.*
It is hop'd no Gentleman will take it ill that they cannot be admitted this Night upon the Stage, or in the Orchestra, on account of the Scenery and Music that are made Use of in the Play.

Never had there been such a contest. Each actor had his adherents, who were equally confident of their hero's success; and the town generally was excited, and ran in crowds to both theatres, sometimes leaving one house at the end of the first three acts, to witness the conclusion of

the play at the other. Covent Garden, during the first nights, was thronged to excess; whilst, for the greater convenience of the crowds flocking to Drury Lane, it was advertised that a passage was opened "from Russel Street into the boxes, where ladies and gentlemen may be set down from their coaches, and there is likewise a better accommodation made for chairs to come up to the house, and be kept in waiting at the end of the passage from Bridges Street." The public was at first somewhat divided in its opinion concerning the merits of the rival Romeos and Juliets. Garrick, it was said, "seized upon the agonies of love, and convulsed his audience with alarm, with frenzy and despair. Every look called upon the painter, every attitude upon the statuary;" but Barry touched all hearts by his portrayal of the gentler moods of the great passion. "The amorous harmony of his features," says James Kirkman, "his melting eyes, and unequalled plaintiveness of voice, and his fine, graceful figure gave him very great superiority over Mr. Garrick in this contest. In the garden scenes of the second and fourth acts, and in the tomb scene, he was supereminently great and affecting; indeed, he bore away the palm from Mr. Garrick in this part."

Then, as for Miss Bellamy, the Juliet of Drury Lane, though her person was elegant, and her voice well-regulated, her passion was spasmodic, and her acting lacked a finish and natural grace

which Garrick's tuition was utterly unable to supply; whilst Mrs. Cibber, who was no less beautiful than her rival, exhibited a pathos and tenderness that stirred her hearers to tears, and charmed them beyond expression. Murphy tells us "the expression of her countenance and the irresistible magic of her voice thrilled to the very soul of her audience."

For twelve consecutive nights the play was performed at Covent Garden, at the end of which time, Mrs. Cibber declared her health was no longer able to bear the strain of so arduous a part. Rich, therefore, withdrew the tragedy in favour of "The Beggars' Opera," which was followed by Peg Woffington's performance of Sir Harry Wildair, of which the town never seemed to tire. Garrick, however, kept the field for another night, and then produced "a dramatic masque, call'd 'Comus.'" But though he had held out longer than his rival, it could not be said he had gained a victory. Garrick's friends, however, were not willing to admit that he had suffered by the contest, and as Macklin tells us, they were anxious to compromise the matter by giving Barry the superiority in the first three acts, and Garrick in the last two. "But," he adds, "this *finesse* did not succeed. Romeo's meeting with Paris in the tomb scene, and his last interview with Juliet, were as fine specimens of Barry's abilities as any in the course of the play."

Whilst the tragedy ran, a thousand epigrams, stories, and comparisons regarding the chief performers went the rounds of the drawing-rooms, coffee-houses, and taverns. The Drury Lane hero was a modern, the Covent Garden an Arcadian lover, it was said. Then a lady of quality declared that had she played Juliet to Garrick's Romeo, so impassioned was he, that she should have expected he would have come up to her; but had Barry been her lover, so seductive was he, that she should certainly have jumped down to him. Next a critic, who favoured the Romeo of one house and the Juliet of another, said he had seen Juliet and Romeo at Covent Garden, but he had seen Romeo and Juliet at Drury Lane. Before the run ended, the town, which had at first enjoyed the contest, grew heartily sick of the play, and called out for a change in the theatrical programme; apropos to which the following epigram was circulated:

"'Well, what's to-night?' says angry Ned,
As up from bed he rouses.
'Romeo again!' He shakes his head.
'A plague on both your houses.'"

Covent Garden, with its strong company, continued to hold its own against Garrick, and amongst the greatest attractions were the playing of Barry and Woffington as Lord and Lady Townley; Quin

and Woffington as Macbeth and Lady Macbeth; Macklin and Woffington as Shylock and Portia.

The next great sensation at Drury Lane was the production of an entertainment called "The Chinese Festival," on the stage of that theatre, five years later. Occurrences of minor interest had of course taken place meanwhile; such as when Garrick introduced the pantomime of "Queen Mab," remarkable for its "great pomp of machinery and everything that could help to *elevate*." In this performance, it may be noted that Woodward, who had played Mercutio excellently well at Drury Lane during the Romeo and Juliet contest, now took the part of a harlequin, whilst Maddox danced upon a slack wire. Soon after came the revivals of Ben Jonson's famous comedy, "Every Man in His Humour," judiciously altered for the modern stage; and Colley Cibber's first play, "Love's Last Shift," originally produced so far back as 1695.

Later on Garrick accepted a tragedy called "The Brothers," from the pen of the Rev. Doctor Young, the admired author of "Night Thoughts." This play had been rehearsed five and twenty years previously, but had never been acted. It was now brought forward in order that the profits arising from its representation might go to the propagation of the gospel in foreign parts; a circumstance "which did as much honour to the heart as the play itself did to the abilities of the author," writes David Baker. It is wonderful to think that, with

such a pious object in view, the prologue of the tragedy should contain such delicate sentiments as those which Kitty Clive spoke in her broadest manner, by way of accounting for its production.

> "A scheme, forsooth, to benefit the nation!
> Some queer old whim of pious propagation.
> Lord! talk so here; the man must be a widgeon.
> Drury may propagate — but not religion."

The tragedy was not a success. The learned author's diction "occasionally swelled to a degree of tumour," as we learn from Arthur Murphy's elegant criticism. Moreover, it was replete with gloom; as might indeed be expected from the writings of one who, when engaged in the labours of composition, would close the windows of his room, and sit by a lamp even at midday, raising his eyes from the pages before him to gaze on the skulls, bones, and instruments of death which constituted the ornaments of his study.

Not deterred by its lack of success, Garrick accepted another tragedy, called "Boadicea," written by Richard Glover, the author of "Leonidas," of whose friendship Garrick, in the days when he played at Goodman's Fields, had so proudly written to Peter the respectable wine-merchant. The most sanguine expectations were entertained of the tragedy, and never fulfilled; for it was found much "better adapted to give pleasure in the closet than in the theatre."

But Garrick, having faith in his contemporaries, and much perseverance, produced yet another tragedy, which caused greater attention than its immediate predecessors.

This was "Virginia," by the Rev. Mr. Crisp, — a scholar, a man of taste, and what is more, a friend of my Lady Coventry, to whom he had at first submitted his play. Her ladyship was not learned. It was sufficient for her and her lord that she was beautiful; but that she might have some idea as to the merits of Mr. Crisp's tragedy, "in blank song," she lent it to friends on whose nice judgment she could depend. These declared it delighted them beyond expression; hearing which the charming countess, full of enthusiasm, drove in her coach to Garrick's door, and sent him word she had a moment's business with him, whereon the great actor came and stood uncovered by her side.

"There, Mr. Garrick," said my lady, "I put into your hands a play which the best judges tell me will do honour to you and the author."

"It was not necessary," writes Arthur Murphy, "for her to say more.

"'Those eyes that tell us what the sun is made of'

had all the power of persuasion, and even of command. Garrick obeyed as if she had been a tenth muse, and prepared the play with the utmost despatch. He, in the character of Virginius, Mossop

in that of Appius, and Mrs. Cibber in Virginia, deserved the compliment paid to them by the author in his preface. But the great stroke which crowned it with success (which will appear almost incredible) was Garrick's manner of uttering two words. Claudius, the iniquitous tool of the Decemvir, claims Virginia as a slave born in his house. He pleads his cause before Appius on his tribunal. During that time Garrick, representing Virginius, stood on the opposite side of the scene, next to the stage door, with his arms folded across his breast, his eyes riveted to the ground, like a mute and lifeless statue.

"Being told at length that the tyrant is willing to hear him, he continued for some time in the same attitude; his countenance expressing a variety of passions, and the spectators fixed in ardent gaze. By slow degrees he raised his head; he paused; he turned around in the slowest manner, till his eyes fixed on Claudius. He still remained silent, and after looking eagerly at the impostor he uttered in a low tone of voice, that spoke the fulness of a broken heart, *Thou traitor.* The whole audience was electrified; they felt the impression, and a thunder of applause testified their delight. Pliny the elder, speaking of certain minerals, says, 'Nature is never more fully displayed than in the minutest objects.' This remark may be applied to the nice touches of such an actor as Garrick."

By this time the public had grown somewhat

tired of tragedies, and Garrick, ever skilful in feeling its pulse, and ever ready to anticipate its wants, produced an opera called "The Fairies," the libretto of which was taken from "The Midsummer-Night's Dream," the music being supplied by one Mr. Smith, pupil of the great Handel. The opera introduced to the notice of the town two foreign singers, Signora Passerini and Signor Curioni; the former of whom alone had some twenty-seven songs to sing in the course of the evening's entertainment. Later in the season came "The Tempest," "made into an opera" by the ingenious Mr. Garrick, with Beard, the ballad singer, in the character of Prospero. The same ingenious author likewise gave the public a version of "The Winter Night's Tale," by chopping and altering it to three acts, and presenting it under the title of "Florizel and Perdita."

The liberties which he took with Shakespeare were differently viewed by various critics. Johnson shook his great head, and smiled at Poor Davy's efforts; but Warburton assured the actor, so far as his alterations of "The Winter's Tale" went, he had "given an elegant form to a monstrous composition." Furthermore, this judicious critic tells Garrick, "You have, in your own additions, written up the best scenes in the play; so that you will easily imagine I read the reformed 'Winter's Tale' with great pleasure. You have greatly improved a fine prologue."

However, Garrick was not to lay such flattering unction to his soul without a challenge; for Theophilus Cibber, in a lecture on Shakespeare, declared "The Midsummer-Night's Dream" "had been minced and fricasseed into a thing called 'The Fairies;' 'The Winter's Tale' mammocked into a droll; and 'The Tempest' castrated into an opera." But Garrick did not much care what his critics thought so long as his house was crowded and his coffers full.

In November, 1755, he resolved to give the town a stronger attraction than it had before witnessed. This was to take the form of a pantomimic performance which would include wonderful dances, and exhibit gimcrack scenery. It was to be called "The Chinese Festival." For the purpose of making the entertainment a success, Garrick, as early as September, 1754, entered into a correspondence with Monsieur Noverre which finally led to the engagement of that artist. Monsieur Jean Noverre was a Swiss dancer and ballet master who had gained a reputation in Paris and the chief courts of Europe by his capers. The artist informed the manager he had been invited to the court of Bavaria, but "knowing Mr. Garrick to have superior talent, and that his judgment would secure the suffrages of the English nation, his own interest and the delight of that country induced him to give his representations in preference there."

The honour of his preference, it may be added, was secured by the assurance of three hundred and fifty guineas for the season, together with a benefit; moreover, his sister was to be *seconde danseuse*, at a salary of a hundred guineas. Garrick intended to place the entertainment on his stage in the handsomest manner; and accordingly gave Monsieur Jean Noverre permission to engage dancers in Paris, buy dresses from a fashionable Parisian *costumier*, and order decorations from Monsieur Boyuet, chef to the Fêtes de la Cour. So delighted was the dancer by Garrick's liberality that he wrote to him, "You are a divine man, and all the artists and the learned of this country desire the happiness of your acquaintance." By October, 1755, monsieur had graciously transported himself to London, bringing with him upwards of a score of chosen dancers, when he commenced his rehearsals for an exhibition, which it was hoped would take the town by storm. This hope was certainly fulfilled, but not in the manner anticipated.

Between the periods of Noverre's engagement and his arrival in London, it happened that hostilities had broken out between France and England, and so patriotic did the populace become that the fine old British prejudice was suddenly raised against the harmless dancer and his troupe. Was the bread to be taken out of the mouths of honest English actors by foreign mountebanks? it was

asked; and was English coin to be freely paid at the doors of Drury Lane to fill the pockets of this frog-eating monsieur and his snail-loving dancers? The mere idea was shameful. The true Briton would never permit such an enormity. Grub Street scribblers, unengaged actors, authors with dark tragedies in their greasy pockets, — all joined in a hue and cry, which became sufficiently noisy to fill Garrick with serious apprehensions that a riot would be attempted at his theatre on the first production of "The Chinese Festival." He therefore appealed to the people through the columns of the *Public Advertiser*, using excuses and arguments, to appease their angry feelings, which seem strange indeed to the eyes of modern readers. The engagement of the obnoxious dancer, he avowed, was entered into twelve months before; and "the insinuation that at this time an extraordinary number of French dancers are engaged is groundless," he continues; "there being at Drury Lane at present as few of that nation as any other theatre now has, or perhaps ever had. *Mr.* Noverre and his brothers are Swiss, of a Protestant family, in the Canton of Berne; his wife and sisters Germans. There are above sixty performers concerned in the entertainment, more than forty of which are English, assisted only by a few French (five men and four women) to complete the ballet as usual."

But these explanations did not receive general

credence, and the middle and lower classes became daily more enraged. In polite circles, however, foreign modes and manners were highly fashionable; and to avow a taste for the French dancers was in itself considered a mark of distinction from vulgar prejudices. Now Garrick, being wise in his generation, sought to appease all classes, and bethought him of a plan which might reconcile the people to his performers. This was to obtain the patronage and presence of the king on the first night of the representation of "The Chinese Festival;" for surely, if his Majesty countenanced the foreigners, his subjects could no longer protest against them on patriotic grounds. Garrick, therefore, through the favour of his friend the Duke of Grafton, then lord chamberlain, obtained the desired favour; and on the 8th of November, 1755, the king sat in the royal box at Drury Lane playhouse.

The first part of the night's entertainment consisted in the performance of "The Fair Quaker of Deal," the low humour and general coarseness of which rendered it, in the nice judgment of his Majesty, one of the finest comedies in the language he vainly attempted to speak. This was immediately followed by "the new grand entertainment of dancing, called 'The Chinese Festival,' which had no sooner begun than it was received by groans, hisses, and other marks of disapprobation which the royal presence alone prevented from

breaking into a riot. The king, somewhat disconcerted, asked the meaning of the uproar, and when informed it was merely an evidence of a patriotic spirit rising in protest against the employment of foreign artists, he laughed heartily, and enjoyed the dancing none the less for the nationality of the performers."

Garrick now saw that "The Chinese Festival" was not likely to be favourably received by the public, but hoped their resentment might be softened by time; he therefore laid it aside until the following Wednesday night, when it was again put on the stage. But it met with no better reception than that which had greeted its first production. The pit hissed vigorously, the gallery groaned loudly, and the whole theatre was in a tumult, whilst Monsieur Jean Noverre and his satellites skipped about the stage, pale from apprehension. The manager felt it would be wise and well to withdraw the entertainment, but he was reluctant to do so until he had derived some return for the great outlay which it had cost him. It was therefore repeated for a couple of nights, at the risk of provoking a general riot.

Garrick was in despair; but he was a man of resources, and was not yet beaten. If he could only again secure the presence of royalty at his theatre, it would lend a double sanction to the festival which must render it acceptable to

the most prejudiced. Now it happened that the king had never seen the first actor in his kingdom play, though his name had been for fourteen years the theme of every tongue. George II., it will be remembered, was no patron of the arts, indeed, he cherished a hearty contempt in his royal breast for the muses nine. He had rewarded Hogarth with a guinea when the great artist had presented him with his inimitable picture, "The March to Finchley," and had severely reproved my Lord Hervey for writing poems, an occupation he considered unworthy a nobleman, and only fit for such as little Mr. Pope. With this lack of taste it is scarcely a matter of wonder that he overlooked the merits of the great actor.

Garrick, therefore, now that the royal presence was likely to be of some service to him, reminded the Duke of Grafton of the neglect he laboured under in never having played before the king. His Grace promised to remedy the grievance, and accordingly it was arranged that his Majesty should see Garrick act in "Richard the Third," after which the wily manager resolved to gladden the royal sight by a second representation of "The Chinese Festival." What his gracious Majesty's first impressions were of the great actor's performance is best told by Arthur Murphy, who was present when Mr. Fitzherbert, one of the attendants in the royal box during the king's visit, came

behind the scenes when the play was over, and the sovereign had gone home.

"Garrick was impatient to know what his Majesty thought of 'Richard the Third,'" writes Murphy. "'I can say nothing on that head,' replied Mr. Fitzherbert; 'but when an actor told Richard, "The Lord Mayor of London comes to greet you," the king roused himself; and when Taswell entered buffooning the character, the king exclaimed, "Duke of Grafton, I like that lord mayor;" and when the scene was over, he said again, "Duke of Grafton, that is good lord mayor."'

"'Well, but the warlike bustle, the drums and trumpets, and the shouts of soldiers must have awakened a great military genius.'

"'I can say nothing of that,' replied Mr. Fitzherbert; 'but when Richard was in Bosworth Field, roaring for a horse, his Majesty said, "Duke of Grafton, will that lord mayor not come again?"'"

After the royal visit Garrick put "The Chinese Festival" on the stage for a few nights, but on each occasion the pit and gallery received it with groans and hisses, much to the disgust of the fashionable world assembled in the boxes, who heartily applauded Monsieur Jean Noverre and his troupe. At last the long threatened storm burst on the house, on the 18th of November, and great was the tumult thereof. On this occasion a most

brilliant and fashionable audience had assembled to witness the performance of "The Earl of Essex," and afterward divert themselves with the spectacle of the French dancers. But when the curtain rose on the entertainment in which they appeared, the hissing and groaning were louder than ever. This was, of course, most objectionable to the polite assembly present, and some young men of quality jumped up, drew their swords, and swore they would stand it no longer.

On this the ladies undertook to point out the ringleaders of the disturbance, and the young gentlemen at once leaped into the pit to drive the unmannerly fellows out-of-doors. But the pit likewise drew its sabre, and each side being about equal in numbers, a battle ensued. Swords flashed and clashed, wigs were flung in the air, oaths were uttered, blood was spilt, women screamed and were conducted out-of-doors. The gallery, meanwhile, rushed to the rescue of the pit, and both combining against a common enemy, they were soon victorious. But now, rendered furious, they resolved to avenge themselves on Garrick. They therefore tore up the benches, smashed the chandeliers, and rushing on the stage, cut the gimcrack Chinese scenery to pieces. The French dancers fled from the theatre with all possible speed, and Garrick betook himself in hot haste to his house in Southampton Street, whither the mob duly followed him and broke his windows.

"The Chinese Festival" was therefore finally withdrawn, and its place in due time supplied by a pantomime called "Fortunatus," all the players in which being thoroughly British, it was received with great favour by the town.

CHAPTER IV.

Peg Woffington's Last Years at Covent Garden — Her Famous Characters — The Comedy of "The Careless Husband" — Introduction of a Scene from Real Life — Its Sparkling Dialogue — Its Plot and Characters — Peg Woffington as Lady Betty Modish — Opinion of an Anonymous Critic — Her Last Night — Cibber, Quin, Barry, Sir Charles Hanbury Williams, and Lady Coventry — The Curtain Descends upon Peg Woffington's Life.

FROM 1754 to 1757, Peg Woffington continued to delight the town by her sprightly acting in a round of famous comedies. The excellent plays of the last century, being wholly unaided by the stage carpenter's tricks or the upholsterer's embellishments, solely depended on the abilities of the players for success. Remembering this, it is a high tribute to record that no drama in which the actress performed lacked success. As Lady Townley in "The Provoked Husband;" as Mrs. Sullen in "The Beaux' Stratagem;" as Angelina in "Love Makes a Man;" as Lady Betty Modish in "The Careless Husband," — she was pronounced inimitable. Her dignified air, her exquisite grace, her tone of re-

finement in the personation of ladies of quality and pleasure, had never been equalled.

Perhaps of all her representations of women of fashion, she excelled as Lady Betty Modish in Colley Cibber's famous comedy. The interest of the play depends not so much on the plot as on the dialogue, which abounds in an easy turn of thought and expression, and a readiness of wit and repartee ever productive of delight to the intelligent audiences of the past century. It was affirmed that the comedy contained "the most elegant dialogue, and the most perfect knowledge of the manners of persons in real high life extant in any dramatic piece which has yet appeared in any language whatever." Moreover, we learn that "the excellent moral, together with the happy choice of characters, the natural and genteel diction, and the spirit of gaiety which pervades the whole rendered it an acknowledged favourite."

Perhaps a fact which gave it additional interest, in the eyes of the public, was that Colley Cibber submitted every scene of it to the revisal and correction of the famous Lady Macclesfield, of whose taste and judgment as to genteel life and manners he had the highest opinion. A scene which happened in this lady's house was, by her permission, introduced into the comedy, by way of imparting a more piquant flavour.

It will be remembered my Lady Macclesfield announced that her son, afterward known as Rich-

ard Savage, was the offspring of Earl Rivers; whereon her lord sought and obtained a divorce, in consequence of which Lady Macclesfield resumed her maiden name, and was known as Miss Mason. But not for long. Being a lady of pleasure, and, moreover, remarkable for her beauty, she wedded Colonel Brett, whose physical excellences and moral worth equalled her own.[1] The one was in every way a complement of the other. A little while after their nuptials the colonel was reported to be free in his gallantries with his lady's maid; a fact Mrs. Brett suspected. But her conjectures were soon changed into conviction; for entering her room one day, she found the gallant colonel and her maid both fast asleep in two chairs. Her philosophy, like her virtue, may be described as easy. She did not for a moment think of disturbing her spouse from his comfortable nap; but she tied her handkerchief around his neck, by way of intimating she had discovered his intrigue, of which she otherwise took no notice. This was the domestic scene which she gave Colley Cibber permission to introduce into his comedy for the better diversion of the town.

To give a picture of the manners "of persons in real high life," the morality depicted was, as in duty bound, remarkable for its freedoms, yet free from vulgar coarseness; an advantage seldom

[1] See "Court Life Below Stairs," vol. i. p. 293, ed. 1882.

to be found in the plays of the time. "The best critics," says Colley Cibber in his preface, "have long and justly complained that the coarseness of most characters in our late comedies have been unfit entertainments for people of quality, especially the ladies; and therefore I was long in hopes that some able pen (whose expectation did not hang upon the profits of success) would generously attempt to reform the town into a better taste than the world generally allows them. But nothing of that kind having lately appeared that would give me an opportunity of being wise at another's expense, I found it impossible any longer to resist the secret temptation of my vanity; and so even struck the first blow myself. The event has now convinced me that whoever sticks closely to nature can't easily write above the understanding of the galleries, though at the same time he may possibly deserve applause of the boxes."

The scene of this excellent comedy is laid at Windsor, and its seven characters play parts almost equal in importance. These are Sir Charles Easy, his lady, and her maid Mrs. Edging, Lady Graveairs who loves Sir Charles, and Lady Betty Modish with whom Lord Morelove and Lord Foppington are in love; the former with the intention of proposing an honourable marriage, the latter with the idea of carrying on a fashionable intrigue.

Sir Charles, a character modelled on Colonel Brett, is a gay soul and a gallant; yet a man who never seemed other than he was, even in his vices, one too in whom, notwithstanding the lightness of his morals, there still shone forth an undesigning honesty, too often absent in smoother faces. In the services of most women, save his wife (a virtuous, discreet, and suffering lady), he was a slave.

"How like children do we judge of happiness," says he. "When I was stinted in my fortune almost everything was a pleasure to me; because most things then being out of my reach I had always the pleasure of hoping for them. Now Fortune's in my hand, she's as insipid as an old acquaintance. It's mighty silly, faith, just the same thing by my wife too. I am told she's exceedingly handsome; nay, and have heard a great many people say she is certainly the best woman in the world. Why, I don't know but she may be, yet I could never find that her person or good qualities gave me any concern. In my eye the woman has no more charms than my mother."

As he philosophises in this manner, my lady's maid, Mrs. Edging, enters the room with a pretty pert air. "What's the matter, child?" says he, and adds, "kiss me, hussy." The hussy prays the deuce may fetch her if she does; "and if you have anything to say to me again, I'll be burned," says she. "Some one has bely'd me to thee," remarks Sir Charles. Whereon she tells him she

has discovered a letter written to him by my Lady Graveairs when she went to fetch his snuff-box out of his waistcoat pocket. At the very thought of it her blood rose; she could tear her ladyship to pieces. She would not stay in a family to be used at this rate, for, says she, quite saucy to Sir Charles, "I'd have you know I have refused lords and dukes for your sake, and that I have had as many blue and green ribbons after me, for ought I know, as would have made me a silken apron."

Hearing all this, Sir Charles promised to twist her pretty white neck if she ever dares to read a letter of his again; and the maid vanishes at the footsteps of her mistress. Poor Lady Easy is a woman of much wisdom and patience, by reason of which, though aware of her husband's deplorable faults, she refrains from upbraiding him with her wrongs, as such would be taking on herself a mean redress; neither does she bid defiance to his falsehood which would but naturally provoke him to undo her. "The uneasy thought of my continual jealousy may tease him to a fixed aversion," she wisely argues; "and hitherto, though he neglects, I cannot think he hates me." She therefore resolves that her eyes and tongue shall be blind and silent to her wrongs until by some gross, apparent proof of his misdoing, he forces her to see — and forgive it.

As she enters Sir Charles is filled with kindness for her, mixed with reproach for himself. He hopes

the air of Windsor agrees with her, and asks what kind of company would most please her. "When business would permit it, yours," she makes answer; "and, in your absence, a sincere friend that were truly happy in an honest husband to sit a cheerful hour and talk in mutual praise of our condition." Then follows a dialogue, charmingly illustrative of the morals of the day.

"Are you, then, really very happy, my dear?" asks Sir Charles. She wonders why he should question it. "Because," says he, "I fancy I am not as good to you as I should be. Nay, the deuce take me, if I don't really confess myself so bad that I have often wondered how any woman of your sense, rank, and person could think it worth her while to have so many useless good qualities."

"I can't boast of my good qualities," says Lady Easy, "nor if I could do I believe you would think 'em useless."

"Nay," asks her spouse, "do you perceive that I am one tittle the better husband for your being so good a wife? Tell me truly, was you never jealous of me?"

"Did I ever give you a sign of it?" asks the poor lady.

"Um — that's true," replies Sir Charles. "But do you really think I never gave you occasion?"

"That's an odd question," says my lady, evasively. "But suppose you had?"

"Why, then, what good has your virtue done

you, since all the good qualities of it could not keep me to yourself?"

"What occasion have you given me to suppose I have not kept you to myself?" asks Lady Easy; whereon Sir Charles finds himself pushed into a corner.

"I given you occasion?" replies he, in some confusion. "Fy, my dear — you may be sure — I — look you, that is not the thing; but still a (death, what a blunder I have made) — a still — I say, madam, you sha'n't make me believe you have never been jealous of me, nor that you ever had any real cause. But I know women of your principles have more pride than those that have no principles at all; and where there is pride there must be some jealousy, so that if you are jealous, my dear, you know you wrong me, and —"

"Why, then," replies she, with great truth, "upon my word, my dear, I don't know that I ever wronged you that way in my life."

"But suppose," Sir Charles persists, "I had given you a real cause to be jealous, how would you do then? Suppose now I were well with a woman of your own acquaintance, that under pretence of frequent visits to you should only come to carry on an affair with me — suppose now, my Lady Graveairs and I were great and so very familiar that not only yourself, but half the town, shall see it?"

She tells him that in such a case she would cry

herself sick in some dark closet, and forget her tears when he spoke kindly to her. And then she asks him if he believed she ever had any ill thoughts of my Lady Graveairs. This shocks Sir Charles.

"Oh, fy, child," says the arrant schemer. "Only, you know, she and I used to be a little free sometimes; so I had a mind to see if you thought there was any harm in it. But since I find you very easy, I think myself obliged to tell you that, upon my soul, my dear, I have so little regard to her person that the deuce take me if I would not as soon have an affair with thy own woman."

Lady Easy says, dryly enough, she would as soon suspect him with one as with the other; on which Sir Charles asks her for a kiss, and declares he wishes he may die, if he does not think her a very fine woman.

As she is, at the conclusion of this conversation, going forth to church, a servant enters to tell Sir Charles my Lord Morelove is at the chocolate house, but will wait upon him presently. Hearing this, Lady Easy, knowing he has been drawn to Windsor by Lady Betty Modish, with whom he is desperately in love, bids Sir Charles ask him to dinner; a hospitality she will likewise offer Lady Betty, at whose lodgings she will call.

When my Lord Morelove enters, he is charged by Sir Charles with following Lady Betty, "and to make you easy," says he, "I cannot see why a

man that can ride fifty miles after a poor stag should be ashamed of running twenty in chase of a fine woman that in all probability will make him so much the better sport;" at which speech my lord embraces him.

Lady Betty Modish, a character Peg Woffington delighted to personate, though secretly in love with Morelove, professes indifference to him, she being a coquette of the first water, and a woman much given to mischief. So she encourages my Lord Foppington — a married man, but a rare gallant — and likewise a friend of his, young Startup, a pert coxcomb just come to a small estate and a great periwig, who may be seen with a cane dangling at his button, his breast open, his hands ungloved, and with one eye tucked under his hat, — in fact, the most prodigious fop imaginable, who flings himself among the women, and won't speak to a commoner when a lord is in company.

Now Lady Betty, the better to hide her affection for Lord Morelove, not only encouraged such coxcombs, but treated her lover shamefully. To piece up a quarrel, she would appoint him to visit her alone, and though she had promised to see no other company the whole day, when he went he was sure to find her among the laughter of noisy fops, coquettes, and coxcombs, dissolutely gay, her eyes brilliant with transport at their flattery, and vanity at her own powers of pleasing. Then

when she had thrown away four hours of good humour upon such a worthless lot, the moment they were gone she grew dull to him, sank into a distasteful spleen, complained she had talked herself into a headache, and indulged in the dear delight of seeing him in pain; and by the time she had stretched and gaped him heartily out of patience, she of a sudden remembered she had outsat her appointment with my Lady Fiddle-faddle, and immediately ordered her coach to the park.

It happened they had just had one of their pretty quarrels when my lord called on his friend. In disputing with her upon the conduct of women, he had taken the liberty of telling her how far he thought she erred in hers. She told him he was rude, and that she could never believe any man could love a woman that thought her in the wrong in anything she had a mind to — at least, if he had a mind to tell her so. This provoked him into a description of her whole character, with as much spite and civil malice as he had seen her bestow upon a woman of true beauty, when the men first toasted her; in the middle of which she told him she desired to be alone, and that he might take his odious, proud heart along with him. On this he bowed low, vowed he or his proud heart would never be humbled by the finest woman, and left her. An hour later he whipped into his coach for London; but by the time he got to Hounslow, he

found her so much in the right that he cursed his pride for contradicting her at all, and became convinced that no woman could be in the wrong to a man that she had in her power. He therefore turned the horses' heads and drove back to Windsor.

Having unburdened himself to Sir Charles, they both plot to pique the proud beauty into showing concern for her ardent lover by provoking her jealousy. At this point a lackey comes from my Lord Foppington, to present his lordship's compliments to Sir Charles, and say, if his honour is at leisure, he will wait on him when he is dressed. Sir Charles, in return, sends him back his services, and hopes his lordship will do him the honour of dining with him that day.

"We may have occasion for him in our design upon Lady Betty," says Sir Charles; "and if you have a mind to be let into the mystery of making love without pain, here's one that's master of the art."

"Pr'ythee, what sense of love has he?" asks my lord, with some disdain.

"Faith," answers Sir Charles, "very near as much as a man of sense ought to have. I grant you, he knows not how to value a woman truly deserving; but he has a pretty just esteem for most ladies about town."

In the second act, Lady Easy and Lady Betty hold critical converse over a new scarf belonging

to the latter, which was pronounced "all extravagance, both in mode and fancy," and was "so new, so lively, so noble, so coquet that 'twas most charming;" Lady Easy declares herself half angry to see a woman of sense concerned so much about her outside, "for when we have taken our best pains about it, 'tis the beauty of the mind alone that gives us lasting value," says she.

On hearing this speech, my Lady Betty Modish is amazingly diverted.

"Oh, my dear, my dear," says her friend, "you have been a married woman to a fine purpose indeed, that know so little of the taste of mankind. Take my word, a new fashion upon a fine woman is often a greater proof of her value than you are aware of."

This my Lady Easy cannot comprehend, when her friend tells her she cannot see a woman of spirit has any business but to dress and make the men like her. Apropos of which, Lady Easy pleads for Morelove, a man of worth and sense. At which Lady Betty laughs. Being a woman of much experience, she gives it as her opinion that men of sense make the best fools in the world; for their sincerity and good breeding threw them so entirely into a woman's power, and gave her such an agreeable thirst for using them ill, to show her authority, that it was impossible to quench it. There was ten thousand times more trouble with a coxcomb.

"But, methinks, my Lord Morelove's manner to you might move any woman to a sense of his merit," pleads Lady Easy.

"Ah," answers proud Lady Betty, "but would it not be hard, my dear, for a poor weak woman to have a man of his quality and reputation in her power, and not let the world see him there? Would any creature sit new-dressed all day in her closet? Could you bear to have a sweet fancied suit, and never show it at the play, or the drawing-room?"

Lady Easy suggests it might, without care, be worn out; but her friend cries pooh, and says my Lord Morelove's a mere Indian damask, not to be worn out. "Upon my conscience, I must give him to my woman at last," says she. "I begin to be known by him; had I not best leave him off, my dear?"

"If you found you did not like him at first, why did you encourage him?" asks Lady Easy.

But my Lady Betty has a ready answer. "Why, what would you have one do?" says she. "I could no more chuse a man by my eye than a shoe; one must draw 'em on a little, to see if they are right to one's foot."

Lady Easy declares she would no more play the fool with a man she could not love, than wear a shoe that pinched her.

"Ah," replies her friend, archly, "but then the poor wretch tells one he'll widen 'em, or do any-

thing; and is so civil and silly that one does not know how to return such a trifle as a pair of shoes, or a heart, upon a fellow's hands again."

At this Lady Easy is wrathful, and wonders how she could bear to see a coxcomb like Lord Foppington draw up his breath, stare her full in the face, and cry, "Gad, you're handsome."

"My dear," says Lady Betty, with that fine sense of the world's ways which distinguished her utterances, "fine fruit will have flies about it, but poor things, they do no harm; for if you observe, people are generally most apt to chuse that the flies have been busy with."

The ladies having given their opinions of mankind, mankind, in the persons of Sir Charles, Morelove, and Foppington, give theirs of womankind in a manner which may be described as free. As the two former converse, the latter enters. They both greet him heartily.

"My dear Lord Foppington," says Sir Charles.

"My lord, I kiss your hands," says Morelove. "You look extremely well."

His lordship declares that to see his friends look so, may easily give a *vermeile* to his complexion. Then they ask him what business has brought him to Windsor.

"Why, then, *entre nous*," replies this airy coxcomb, "there is a certain *fille-de-joye* about the court here that loves winning at cards better than all the fine things I have been able to say to her;

so I have brought an odd thousand bill in my pocket that I design, *tête-à-tête*, to play off with her at piquet."

Morelove replies that she must be a woman of consequence by the value he sets upon her favours; whilst Sir Charles declares nothing's above the price of a fine woman.

"Nay, look you, gentlemen," says Foppington, "the price may not happen to be altogether so high, neither; for I fancy I know enough of the game to make it but an even bet I get her for nothing. For if she happen to lose a good sum to me, I shall buy her with her own money."

Lord Morelove confessed this was new.

"You know," Foppington explained, "'tis not impossible that I may be five hundred pounds deep with her; then bills may fall short, and the devil's in't if I want assurance to ask her to pay me some way or other."

"And a man," says the gallant Sir Charles, "must be a churl indeed that won't take a lady's personal security."

Whereon they three laugh right merrily.

The conversation continuing on the same interesting theme, Foppington brags that he would no more give up his heart to a woman than his sword to a bully; for they were both as insolent as the devil after it. Apropos to which Sir Charles reminds him his chief business then at Windsor was to surrender his heart to a woman of fashion; but

he protests he merely desired the reputation of an affair with her, that being the most inviting part of an intrigue.

"But how can you that profess indifference," says Lord Morelove, "think it worth your while to come so often up to the price of a woman of quality?"

"Because you must know," replies the fop, "that most of them begin now to come down to reason, at least with the wiser sort 'tis not of late so very expensive — now and then a *partie quarrie*, a jaunt of two in a hack to an Indian house, a little china, an odd thing for a gown or so; and in three days after you may meet her at the conveniency of trying it *chez Mademoiselle d'Epingle*."

"Ay, ay, my lord," chimes in Sir Charles: "and when you are there, you know, what between a little chat, a dish of tea, mademoiselle's good humour, and a *petit chanson* or two, the devil's in't if a man can't fool away the time till he sees how it looks upon her by candle-light."

Then they away to dinner, and my Lady Betty Modish, who assumes an insolence that might furnish out a thousand devils, flirts desperately with Foppington, until Morelove is almost distracted. In this mood she says a thousand spiteful things to torture his heart, and is in such high humour that she laughs affection and constancy to scorn, if you please.

"Sincerity in love," says she, "is as much

out of fashion as sweet-stuff; nobody takes it now."

"Oh, no mortal, madam," replies Foppington, "unless it be here and there a squire that's making his lawful court to the cherry-cheeked charms of my lord bishop's great, fat daughter in the country."

At this Lady Betty laughs, and declares he is a most provoking creature, and throws her hand carelessly on his, encouraged by which he ventures to make another joke at the expense of the time-honoured custom of marriage.

"It is, indeed," says he, "a prodigious security to one's inclinations. A man's likely to take a world of pains in an employment where he can't be turned out for his idleness."

Her ladyship laughs again, and then ventures a sneer at reputation.

"Indeed," she remarks, "that jewel is a very fanciful business. One shall not see a homely creature in town, but wears it in her mouth as monstrously as the Indians do bobs at their lips; and it really becomes them just alike."

She in her turn is wrought to fury by Morelove flirting with my Lady Graveairs, whose person and condition seem cut out for the ease of a lover; inasmuch as she was young and handsome, wild, and a widow. Moreover, her vexation is increased by her lover's speeches. He confesses to Fop-

pington that he has the worst judgment in the world for a woman, for no man had been more deceived.

"Then," says Foppington, "your lordship, I presume, has been apt to chuse in a mask, or by candle-light?"

"In a mask, indeed, my lord," he replies; "and of all masks the most dangerous."

"Pray, what may that be?" inquires Lord Foppington.

"A bare face."

"Your lordship will pardon me," says Foppington, "if I don't so readily comprehend how a woman's bare face can hide her face."

"It often hides her heart," says Morclove; "and therefore I sometimes think it a more dangerous mask than a piece of velvet; that's rather a mark than a disguise of an ill woman. But the mischiefs skulking behind a beauteous form give no warning; they are always sure, fatal, and innumerable."

"Oh, barbarous aspersion!" cries Lady Betty. "My Lord Foppington, have you nothing to say for the poor women?"

His lordship has. "I must confess, madam," says he, "nothing of this nature happened in my course of amours. I always judge the beauteous form of a woman to be the most agreeable part of her composition; and when once a lady does me the honour to toss that into my arms, I think my-

self obliged in good nature not to quarrel about the rest of her equipage."

Next comes the scene where Lady Easy discovers Sir Charles and Edging both asleep in two easy chairs, upon which the poor lady trembles and starts, breaks into blank verse, and calls on virtue, patience, and reason to protect her. Then her eyes falling on Sir Charles's head (bare of its periwig), she lays her handkerchief upon it, lest in the unwholesome air some languishing distemper might overtake him. When he awakes and finds he has been discovered, he grows suddenly conscience-stricken, and makes vows of future constancy to his lady — whose virtues are now most plain to his sight. Then they both unite in bringing Lady Betty and Morelove together; a fact that is accomplished without much trouble. The proud flirt, who fancies Lord Morelove's affection has turned away from her, owns she has been wrong, and that she used Foppington but as the tool of her resentment. "Send for him," says she, "and you shall be witness of the contempt and detestation I have for any forward hopes his vanity may have given him."

"Oh, let my soul," says poor Morelove, "thus bending to your power, adore this soft descending goodness," and he kisses her hand and makes her a thousand pretty speeches. This reconciliation does not much discomfort Foppington's peace of mind. "Look you, Charles," he says, to More-

love, "'tis true, I did deign to have played with her alone, but he that will keep well with the ladies must be content to humour them in their whims." Then when Lady Betty asks his pardon for the liberties she has taken with him, he replies, good-humouredly, "Oh, madam, don't be under the confusion of an apology on my account; for in cases of this nature I am never disappointed but when I find a lady of the same mind two hours together. Madam, I have lost a thousand fine women in my time, but never had the ill manners to be out of humour with any one, for refusing me, since I was born."

All things being happily arranged, a song is sung, Sir Charles utters a moral sentiment, and the curtain drops.

Such was the comedy of "The Careless Husband," which afforded such infinite pleasure to the playgoers of the last century. As Lady Betty Modish, Peg Woffington's acting was a perfect and vivacious study of which the public never tired. The grace and variety of her movements, the saucy turn of her head, the impatient tapping of her foot upon the floor, the opening and shutting of her fan, the bend of her shapely body — afforded delight.

In the season of 1756–57, we find her playing Helena in "The Rover;" the Frenchified Lady in the tragedy of "Theodosius;" Mrs. Ford in "The Merry Wives of Windsor;" the Queen in

"Hamlet;" and Charlotte in "The Refusal." In each of these she won applause. An anonymous contemporary critic, speaking of her, says: "She first steals your heart, and then laughs at you, as secure of your applause. There is such a prepossession arises from her form; such a witchcraft in her beauty; and to those who are personally acquainted with her, such an absolute command from the sweetness of her disposition — that it is almost impossible to criticise upon her."

Then Hitchcock testifies to her bearing in private life. "To her honour be it ever remembered," says he, "that whilst in the zenith of her glory, courted and caressed by all ranks and degrees, it made no alteration in her behaviour; she remained the same gay, affable, obliging, good-natured Woffington to every one around her." And again he bears witness to her willingness to help others. "Not the lowest performer in the theatre did she refuse playing for. Out of twenty-six benefits in one season, she acted in twenty-four. Such traits of character," he adds, "must endear the memory of Mrs. Woffington to every lover of the drama."

It was noted that during the season of 1756–57, her appearance was not so regular as in days of yore; for now her health began to give way, and there were nights and weeks when illness kept her absent from the brilliant scenes which had ever been her delight. This indisposition was not,

however, regarded by her as in any way serious, but rather as the result of overwork and fatigue, which rest would speedily remedy. But this was the last season in which she was destined to play. Nor did she take farewell of a public which long ago had enshrined this beautiful and gifted woman as their favourite; though a large section of those to whom her acting had for years afforded delight were present when the awful summons came that heralded her death.

On the night of the 3d of May, 1757, she appeared as Rosalind, for the benefit of two minor actors and a French dancer. The boxes were brilliant with the beauty of fair women; the pit, brave in its numbers of coffee-house critics, elegant dilettanti, and men about town; the galleries, crowded and attentive — for her Rosalind invariably drew the town. For the first four acts of the play all went smoothly, though it was evident to those behind the scenes that Peg Woffington was unwell. During the fifth act she complained of serious indisposition; her dark eyes wore the haggard look which comes of pain; her cheeks were blanched under the rouge, and the smiles on her lips were for once the result of effort. Tate Wilkinson, who stood at the wings, offered her his arm as she came off the stage in one of the earlier scenes. She accepted the courtesy graciously, remembering the hard words she had once spoken to him in her passion. Her manner was

now full of that grace and gentleness which had never failed to secure the good-will of those around her.

When, in the last scene, she again came off to change her dress, she once more spoke of being seriously ill; but in due time went on the stage to finish her part, and succeeded so far that she reached the line in the epilogue, "If I were among you, I would kiss as many of you as had beards that pleased me, complexions that liked me," then faltered; but after a moment's hesitation went bravely on again, "and breaths that I —" Here her voice faltered; she clasped her hands to her side, cried out in a voice of pain and terror, "O God! O God!" tottered to the wings, and would have fallen but that she was caught.

"The audience," says Tate Wilkinson, "sank into awful looks of astonishment, to see one of the most handsome women of the age, a favourite principal actress, who had for several seasons given high entertainment, struck so suddenly by the hand of death in such a situation of time and place, and in her prime of life, being then about thirty-nine."

She lived, however, for almost three years after that terrible night, though the playhouse knew her no more. The seeds of an internal complaint which had long lain in her constitution now sprang up, and rapidly increased in growth. She was no longer the bright, beautiful woman the town had worshipped, and she wisely refrained from chal-

lenging comparisons with her past. She had long ago declared she would never destroy her reputation by clinging to the shadow when the substance had gone. "When," said she, "I can no longer bound on the boards with elastic step, and when the enthusiasm of the public begins to show symptoms of change, that night will be the last appearance of Margaret Woffington." She now kept her word. Residing quietly at Teddington, her days were chiefly spent in exercises of kindliness and charity to the poor surrounding her.

"After her retirement," says John Galt, "her conduct is spoken of by all who have expressed an opinion of her as something like a phenomenon. It was simple, graceful, and pious. It partook of all that was blameless in her previous life."

During these three last years, in which she walked in the valley of the shadow of death, many of those famous in her brief day were likewise missing from the busy throng of London life. Old Colley Cibber, powdered, painted, and patched, airy, elegant, graceful, and gay to the last, quitted the world's stage a few months after Peg Woffington left that of Covent Garden ; his exit, moreover, was almost as sudden. As early as six o'clock one December morning, in the year 1757, he held pleasant converse with his man servant, being full of gaiety and good humour. When the valet returned, he found his master sleeping with a smile upon his face. He woke no more. Burly James

Quin had long since retired to Bath, indignant, it was said, at Barry's success. The public missed him, but not to the extent he imagined; and he therefore regretted his departure from the boards, and became anxious to return.

By way of hinting the possibility of such an occurrence to Rich, he wrote to the manager a note remarkable for its brevity.

"I am at Bath. — Quin."

To this an answer, equally laconic, came back.

"Stay there, and be damned. — Rich."

He did stay there; for never again did he accept an engagement, but he would journey up to town occasionally to play for the benefit of an old friend at one of the big houses.

It was on one of these occasions that he quarrelled with Foote, who remained as witty and merry as ever. They subsequently made up their dispute, but not without a protest from Foote. "Jemmy," said he, "you should not have said that I had but one shirt, and that I lay a-bed while it was washed." "Sammy," he replied, "I never *could* have said so; for I never knew you had a shirt to wash." At Bath he grew old with grace — loving his bottle, his dinner, and his jest as much as in days of yore. But though he played Falstaff in real life, he would, in the last years of his existence, play the part no more upon the stage, not even to oblige his old friend Ryan. "I would play for you, if I could," he wrote him,

"but I will not whistle Falstaff for any man. I have willed you one thousand pounds. If you want money, you may have it, and save my executors trouble."

And so the merry old soul betook his way down the hill of life with a joke on his lips for all he encountered by the way. One day, a young jackanapes, who was rushing up the hill as fast as the old actor was descending it, said to him, with the thoughtlessness of youth, "What would you give to be as young as I am?" "In truth, sir, I would submit to be almost as foolish," said the old fellow; and he went his way, reaching the valley of eternal shadows a little later than Peg Woffington.

Charles Macklin had gone over to Ireland with Barry and Woodward, who had built a new theatre in Crow Street, Dublin, which nearly ruined them; and Theophilus Cibber, in attempting to reach the same country, went down to the bottom of the sea, in company with Maddox, the wire dancer, and troubled his wife and the world no more. Then Sir Charles Hanbury Williams, with whom Peg Woffington's name was once closely associated, had died by his own hand. He had been sent out to Russia in the character of an English ambassador, and had returned deplorably demented. "Poor Sir Charles Williams is returned from Russia," writes Horace Walpole; who adds a line or two of scandal, quite in a friendly way. "This is imputed to a lady at Hamburgh, who gave him,

and from whom he took, some assistance to his passion. But we hope he will soon recover."

And now, alas, my Lady Coventry lay sick unto death of a consumption. "What a wretched end Lady Coventry makes after her short-lived reign of beauty," writes Mrs. Delany, a prudent lady and a severe. "Not content with the extraordinary share Providence had bestowed on her, she presumptuously and vainly thought to mend it; and by that means, they say, has destroyed her life, for Doctor Taylor says the white she made use of for her face and neck was rank poison. I wish it may be a warning to her imitators."

With a reluctance amounting almost to terror, the poor, vain, pleasure-loving countess beheld death approaching her whilst she was yet in the very morning of her vivacious, butterfly life. For weeks she lay in bed, with the blinds of her chamber drawn, so that no light was admitted save what came from the lamp of a teakettle, in order that the sad ravages which illness had made in her beauty might not be perceptible. One morning it happened that a letter came, directed to my lord, in the handwriting of Duchess Hamilton, her sister. Lady Coventry broke the seal, and read her fate in the letter, which lamented her as one on the brink of the grave, whom her sister might never see again. It nearly killed her. "I was called to her, and found her almost fainting and dying away," writes Doctor Wall to George

Selwyn, who loved the countess well. "However, she soon after recovered, and I took my leave; but after I was gone, the same scene was several times renewed. Her attendants thought her expiring." During the last weeks of her life, she would permit no one to see her; taking her medicines and cordials, poor soul, in through the curtains of her bed, which she would not suffer to be drawn.

At the same time, Peg Woffington, who had been scarcely less beautiful, or less sought after, lay dying, attended by her sister, — the child whom she had rocked in the garret in George's Court, the young lady whom she had married to a scion of the nobility. To her she willed the sum of five thousand pounds, which she had amassed, together with her valuable jewelry. To her mother she had long allowed thirty pounds a year. O'Keeffe remembered seeing this "respectable-looking old lady, in her short, black velvet cloak, with deep, rich fringe, a diamond ring, and a small agate snuff-box, going the rounds of the Catholic chapels and visiting her neighbours."

Now that Peg Woffington lay dying, she remembered there was one person with whom she was not at peace. This was the beautiful and brazen Bellamy, with whom she had once had a green-room squabble regarding the colour of a gown, of which George Anne makes much in her "Memoirs." The quarrel was truly feminine in its begin-

ning and its continuation, they refusing to exchange a word with each other for months. Now, however, Peg Woffington besought Miss Bellamy to come to her, and entreated that they might be reconciled, when accordingly words of peace were exchanged between them. This was one of the last acts of her life. She died on the 28th of March, 1760. Her remains were laid in a vault beneath Teddington Church, in which a tablet records the following inscription:

"Near this monument lies the body of Margaret Woffington, spinster, born October 18th, 1720, who departed this life March 28th, 1760, aged 39 years."

Her life had not been blameless. Endowed with the finer susceptibilities attendant on genius, which are at once the pleasure and peril of that heaven-sent gift, suddenly lifted to a leading position in the theatrical world, surrounded by the most brilliant and fashionable society of the period, sought after for her wit, lauded for her beauty, loved for her worth, she had been led by temptation from the strict, straight path. But her heart had been loyal to her friends, generous to the poor, sympathetic to the afflicted, and in her last years she had sorrowed and suffered.

What hand shall now cast a stone upon her grave?

VERSES

DEDICATED TO PEG WOFFINGTON

VERSES

DEDICATED TO PEG WOFFINGTON

SONG TO SYLVIA.

BY D. G.

[The following is to be found in a collection of "Poems by Various Hands," issued by Dodsley in 1743.]

If Truth can fix thy wav'ring Heart,
  Let Damon urge his claim;
He feels the Passion, void of art —
  The pure, the constant Flame.

Though sighing swains their Torments tell —
  Their sensual love contemn;
They only prize the beauteous Shell,
  But slight the inward Gem.

Possession cures the wounded Heart,
  Destroys the Transient Fire,
But when the Mind receives the Dart,
  Enjoyment whets desire.

Your charms such slavish Sense Controul,
A Tyrant's short lived Reign!
But milder Reason rules the Soul,
Nor Time can break the Chain.

By Age your Beauty will decay,
Your Mind improve with Years:
And when the Blossom fades away
The Ripening Fruit appears.

May Heaven and Sylvia grant my suit,
And bless the future Hour —
That Damon who can taste the Fruit
May gather every Flower.

ON MRS. WOFFINGTON.

[From the *Gentleman's Magazine.*]

Tho' Peggy's charms have oft been sung,
The darling theme of every tongue —
New praises still remain.
Beauties like hers may well infuse
New flights, new fancies to the muse,
And brighten every strain.

'Tis not her form alone I prize,
Which every fool that has but eyes
As well as I can see:
To say she's fair is but to say
When the sun shines at noon 'tis day,
Which none need learn of me.

But I'm in love with Peggy's mind
Where every virtue is combined
That can adorn the fair —
Excepting one you scarce can miss,
So trifling that you would not wish
That virtue had been there.

She who possesses all the rest
Must sure excel the prude, whose breast
That virtue shares alone.
To seek perfection is a jest,
They who have fewest faults are best —
And Peggy has but one!

TO MISS WOFFINGTON, 1740.

[This was written on the blank page of a book belonging to Davies, the biographer of Garrick.]

If when the Breast is rent with Pain,
It be no crime the Nymph should know it —
Oh, Woffington! accept the strain,
Pity, though you'll not cure, the Poet.

Should you reject my ardent prayer,
Yet send not back the amorous Paper:
My pangs may help to curl your Hair:
My passion fringe the glowing Taper.

No more the Theatre I seek
But when I'm promised there to find you;
All Horton's merits now grow weak,
And Clive remains far, far behind you.

'Tis thus the polished Pebble plays
And gains awhile some vulgar praises,
But soon withdraws its feeble rays
When the superior Diamond blazes.

Who sees you shine in *Wildair's* part,
But sudden feels his bosom panting;
Your very sex receives the Dart
And almost thinks there's nothing wanting.

ON SEEING MRS. WOFFINGTON APPEAR IN SEVERAL TRAGICK CHARACTERS.

[From the *London Magazine* of February, 1749.]

Delightful Woffington! So formed to please!
Strikes every taste, can every passion raise:
In shapes as various as her Sexe's are —
And all the Woman seems comprised in her.
With easy diction & becoming mien,
Distinguished shines & shines in every scene.
The prude and the coquet in her we find,
And all the foibles of the fairer kind,
Expressed in characters themselves would own,
The manners such as might the vice atone.
Her taking graces win them new esteem,
They're changed to virtues, or like virtues seem.
If tragic airs in solemn strains she shows,
The pitying audience feel the mimick woes,
The soft affection swims in gushing tears.
We weep the ills of twice two thousand years:
When warlike Pyrrhus woos th' afflicted fair,
Then all Andromache's displayed in her.
The springs of nature feel her powerful art
She moves the passions & she melts the heart.
Her noble manner all the soul alarms
When sorrow shakes us or when virtue charms,
Sincere emotions in each bosom rise
And real anguish knows no mock disguise

Who would not beauty's falling fate deplore,
Who sees her faint & droop & sink in *Shore!*
The dying fair excites such gen'rous pain,
What bosom bleeds not when she begs in vain!
Extreme distress so feelingly she draws
She seems to challenge — not to court applause.
Secure of worth, not anxious of her claim,
She coldly draws a careless bill on fame.
The noblest sentiments by her display'd
In all the pomp of Milton's Muse array'd,
Emphatic beauties from her hand receive
Adorned by graces which they used to give.
Envy herself distorted tribute pays,
And Candour spreads & Justice crowns her lays.

A SONG ON MRS. WOFFINGTON'S VISIT TO IRELAND IN JULY, 1751.

[From the *London Magazine* of September, 1751.]

LAVINIA, whom so long we mourn'd,
With mirth and beauty is return'd.
Again she gilds Jerne's plains
And cheers anew its drooping swains.
Now joy o'er ev'ry visage spreads,
And ev'ry plant her influence sheds;
The fields their verdure fresher show;
The flowers with richer colours glow.
Where'er she treads there pleasure moves
The graces there, and there the loves.
The semblance in each part is seen
Her face, her shape, her angel mien.
But who can say the fond surprise
The heav'n that glances from her eyes?
Ah! there bewitching softness dwells
More binding than e'en magic spells.
Ah! could we stay the lovely maid
Or would some pity'ng pow'r persuade
Her here for ever to remain,
To give us golden days again,
And gently o'er our hearts preside
Our flocks, our lawns and what beside,
Then blest our time would glide away
Happy beneath her downy sway.

THE CONTEST DECIDED.

ADDRESSED TO MRS. WOFFINGTON.

[From a broadside in the British Museum.]

THE Muses having lately met
To settle their poetic State;
The Sock and Buskin 'gan to spar
(For Females still were fond of War)
And of each other Jealous grown,
Resolved to pull each other down!

Yet all, the Motive, must commend,
'Twas which was Virtue's better Friend,
Whose scholars too could represent
Best what the Muse and Poet meant.
Elate with Hope they take the field,
And armed with Reason scorn to yield.
As conscious of superior worth
First stepp'd the Buskin'd Heroine forth;
Her solemn Air & sable Train
Were Prologue to her Pompous Strain.

'Tis mine, she said, in Courts to shine,
By me the Hero grows divine;
'Tis mine to crush the haughty Great,
And raise the modest to his Seat;
To strike the guilty Mind with Fear,
And from the Harden'd force a Tear;

To raise, depress, or melt the Heart
(Mine — SHERIDAN'S and GARRICK'S art),
With heroes I adorn the stage,
And into virtue charm the age.

Here interposed the Comic Maid:
But still your subjects are the Dead,
You show what former worlds have been,
In me the present Age is seen;
Like me, if you would banish Crimes,
Hold forth a Mirror to the Times.
Besides, how little were your Power,
Was Folly left to reign secure?
For Folks are now not over nice,
But soon from Folly step to Vice;
To mend mankind you must begin,
And teach them first to fly from Sin.

If PRITCHARD or if CLIVE deride,
Pert dulness drops its saucy Pride;
And those who laugh at Reason's Rule,
Smart at my strokes of Ridicule,
For Fools ill brook the name of Fool.
Thus quarrel'd they like Man and Wife,
But thus Apollo ends the Strife.

Rivals no more contend for Fame —
By differ'n't means your End's the same,
And lest these Players should divide You,
Let my Advice and Wisdom guide You;

You two against them all combine,
And ev'ry Pow'r to one assign,
Blend Spirit, Softness, Taste, and Sense,
And from a finish'd Excellence —
Be this the Darling of your Care,
And make your Choice among the Fair.

They strait agreed, but left the Choice
To rest upon his Godship's Voice,
Who, glad to bid the Quarrel cease,
Named WOFFINGTON, and all was Peace.

ON MISS WOFFINGTON.

[The following appeared in one of the Dublin papers.]

WHILST you, the pride and glory of the stage,
At once improve and please the giddy age:
The well played character our wonder draws,
And still attention marks with due applause.
Explore the theatres — how very few
Express the passions which the poet drew!
Mad with the love of praise the actor tries,
Like Bayes to elevate and to surprise,
And women oft, whose beauty charms alone,
Neglect the poet's part to play their own.
But you each character so close pursue
We think the author copied it from you.
True judge of nature! justly you despise
To practice tricks by which so many rise.
Hail then! in whom united we behold
Whatever graced the theatres of old:
A form above description, and a mind
By judgment temper'd and by wit refin'd.
Cut off in beauty's prime when OLDFIELD died,
The Muses wept and threw their harps aside —
But now resume the lyre, amazed to see
Her greatest beauties far outdone by thee.

TO HIS GRACE THE LORD-LIEUTENANT OF IRELAND, ETC., ETC.

AS THE HUMBLE PETITION OF MARGARET WOFFINGTON, SPINSTER.

[This appeal was issued in 1753 by Peg Woffington as president of the Beefsteak Club.]

MAY it please your Grace, with all submission,
I humbly offer my petition:
Let others with as small pretensions
Teaze you for places and for pensions,
I scorn a pension or a place,
My whole design's upon your Grace.
The form of my petition's this —
I claim, my lord, an annual kiss —
A kiss by sacred custom due
To me and to be paid by you.
But lest you entertain a doubt,
I'll make my title clearly out.
It was, as near as I can fix,
The fourth of April, 'forty-six —
(With joy I recollect the day)
As I was dressing for the play,
In stept your Grace, and at your back
Appeared my trusty guardian MAC;
A sudden tremor shook my frame —
Lord! how my colour went and came.

At length, to cut my story short,
You kiss'd me, sir, heav'n bless you for't,
The magic touch my spirits drew
Up to my lips, and out they flew,
Such pain and pleasure mixed, I vow,
I felt all o'er, I don't know how.
The secret, when your Grace withdrew,
Like lightning to the greenroom flew,
And plunged the women into spleen,
The men receiv'd me for their queen,
And from that moment swore allegiance —
Nay, RICH himself was all obedience.
Since that your Grace has never yet
Refused to pay the annual debt.
To prove these facts, if you will have it,
Old MAC will make an affidavit.
If MAC'S rejected as a fibber,
I must appeal to COLLEY CIBBER.
By good advice I hither came
To keep up my continual claim.
The duty's not confin'd to place,
But everywhere affects your Grace,
Which being personal on you
No deputy, my lord, can do.
But, hold! say some, his situation
Is chang'd. Consider his high station.
Can station or can titles add
To DORSET more than DORSET had?
Let others void of native grace,
Derive faint honours from a place.

His greatness to himself he owes,
Nor borrows lustre but bestows
That's true, but still you answer, wide,
How can he lay his state aside?
Then think betimes, can your weak sight
Support that sudden burst of light?
Will you not sicken as you gaze,
Nay, haply perish in the blaze —
Remember SEMELE who dy'd
A fatal victim to her pride.
Glorious example! how it fires me!
I burn, and the whole God inspires me —
My bosom is to fear a stranger,
The prize is more enhanced by danger!

ON SEEING MRS. WOFFINGTON AS ANDROMACHE, Etc.

[The following lines were printed in the *Gentleman's Magazine* in 1754, after the re-opening of Smock Alley Theatre.]

Fired with thy praise I strike the trembling strings,
Bold is the flight for my unpracticed wings.
Cou'd I preserve thy beauties in my lays
And copy the perfections which I praise.
How wou'd each reader's varying visage glow
With ruddy mirth — now fade with livid woe!
When fair *Andromache* laments the fate
Of her loved lord & Asia's ruined state,
Or paints her terrors while the flame devours,
Troy's shattered bulwarks, and her trembling towers —
Big with uncommon woes the scene appears,
And the whole ruin thunders in our ears;
But when she trembles for her helpless son,
Her fears affect us and become our own.
Behold! she lays the tender airs aside,
Quits ease for state, humility for pride;
The mien majestic Jove's high Queen bestows,
And Phœbus tunes each period as it flows —
'Tis then *Hermione* our wonder draws,
And arms our vengeance in her beauty's cause;

Superior to her wrongs, her soul disdains
Meanly to sue — but like a queen complains;
But now farewell the buskin & the train
See *Townly* brighten in the comic scene,
There elegance, propriety, & ease,
Taste, judgment, spirit, all conspire to please.
Bright beauty's power th' unhappy gazers prove,
And admiration kindles into love.
Attend, ye criticks, every action scan,
Weigh all her words — then censure if ye can!

TO MRS. WOFFINGTON.

ON HEARING THAT SHE GREW BETTER.

Will then the tyrant loose his fang
And drop the cold arrest,
Shall health subdue the vital pang,
Shall Rapture warm thy breast?

Shall Wit once more his seat ascend
And in thy converse reign,
Shall Humour on his throne attend,
Shall Fancy fill his train?

Shall Sense once more, shall Worth be seen
To charm the gay and wise;
Shall Charity exalt that mien
And brighten up those eyes?

Let prudes, let hypocrites be dumb
And drop the saintly mask,
Let Want to thee and Anguish come
Receive the boon, not ask.

How copious did thy bounty flow
When on the bed of death,
To cheer the wailing Widow's woe,
To aid the Orphan's breath.

Let Minden's sad remains declare —
O give it breath to fame!
Who snatched the wretched from despair? —
Engrave, O Time! thy name!

The grateful stage now trims anew
Thy blooming wreath with pain,
Thy tempting laurels lifts to view,
But lifts, she fears, in vain.

A MONODY TO THE MEMORY OF MARGARET WOFFINGTON.

BY JOHN HOOLE.

"*Flebelis indignos salve capillos,*
Ah! nimis ex vero nunc tibi nomen exit." — OVID.

THERE fled the fair that all beholders charm'd,
Whose beauty fir'd and whose spirit warm'd.
In that sad sigh th' unwilling breath retir'd
The grace, the glory of our scene expir'd.
And shall she die, the Muses' rites unpaid,
No grateful lays to deck her parting shade,
While on her bier the sister Graces mourn,
And weeping Tragedy bedews her urn
While Comedy her cheerful vein foregoes,
And learns to melt with unaccustom'd woes?

Accept (Oh, once admir'd) these artless lays,
Accept this mite of tributary praise.
Oh! could I paint thee with a master's hand,
And give thee all thy merits could demand,
These lines would flow with true poetic flame,
Bright as thine eyes and faultless as thy frame.
We mourned thy absence from the scene retir'd,
Each longing heart again thy charms desir'd;
Yet still, alas! we hoped again to view
Our wish, our pleasure, every joy in you!

Again thy looks might grace the tragic rage,
Again thy spirit fill the comic stage —
But lo! disease hangs hov'ring o'er thy head,
Dire danger stalks around thy frighted bed.
Those starry eyes have lost each beamy ray
And ghastly sickness makes the Fair her prey!
Death shut the scene and all our hopes are o'er,
Those beauties now must glad the night no more.
Say ye, whose features' youthful lustre bloom,
Whose lips exhale Arabia's soft perfume —
Must every gift in silent dust be lost,
No more the wish of man or female breast?
Ah me! with time must every grace be fled —
She, once the pride of all our stage, is dead.
Closed are those eyes that every bosom fir'd,
Pale are those charms that every heart inspir'd
Where now the mien with majesty endued,
Which, oft surprised, a ravish'd audience viewed?

What forms too oft the tragic scene disgrace!
What tasteless airs the comic scene deface!
Though tuneful Cibber still the Muse sustains,
By nature fram'd to pour the moving strains:
Tho' from her eye each heartfelt passion breaks,
And more than music warbles when she speaks.
When shall we view again, like thine conjoin'd,
A form angelic and a piercing mind;
Alike in every mimic scene to steer
The grave, the gay, the lively and severe?
Thy judgment saw, thy taste each beauty caught,

No senseless parrot of the poet's thought.
Thy bosom well could heave with fancied woe
And from thy own, our tears were taught to flow.
Whene'er we view'd the Roman's sullied fame,
Thy beauty justified the hero's flame.
What heart must then but Anthony approve
And own the world was nobly lost for love!
What ears could hear in vain thy cause implor'd
When soothing arts appeas'd thy angry lord!
Each tender heart the rough Ventidius blam'd,
And Egypt gained the sigh Octavia claim'd.
Thy eloquence each hush'd attention drew
While Love usurped the tears to Virtue due.

See Phaëdra rise majestic o'er the scene,
What raging pangs distract the hapless queen!
How does thy sense the poet's thought refine,
Beam through each word, and brighten every line!
What nerve, what vigour glows in every part
While classic lays appear with classic art!
Who now can bid the proud Roxana rise,
With love and anger sparkling in her eyes?
Who now shall bid her breast in fury glow,
With all the semblance of imperial woe,
While the big passion raging in her veins
Would hold the master of the world in chains —
But Alexander now forsakes our coast
And Ah! Roxana is for ever lost!
Nor less thy pow'r, when rigid virtue fir'd,
The chaster bard and purer thoughts inspir'd.

What kneeling form appears, with steadfast eyes
Her bosom heaving with Devotion's sighs —
'Tis she! In thee we own the mournful scene,
The fair resemblance of a martyred queen.
Here Guido's skill might mark thy speaking frame
And catch from thee the painter's magic flame!

Blest in each art, by nature form'd to please,
With beauty, sense, with elegance and ease;
Whose piercing genius studied all mankind,
All Shakespeare opening to thy vigorous mind,
In every scene of comic humour known,
In sprightly sallies, wit was all thy own —
Whether you seemed the Cit's more humble wife
Or shone in *Townly's* higher sphere of life,
Alike thy spirit knew each turn of wit,
And gave new force to all the poet writ.

Nor was thy worth to public scenes confin'd,
Thou knewest all the noblest feelings of the mind.
Thy ears were ever open to distress,
Thy ready hand was ever stretched to bless,
Thy breast humane, for each unhappy felt,
Thy heart for others' sorrows prone to melt.
In vain did Envy point her scorpion sting,
In vain did Malice shake her blasting wing.
Each generous breast disdain'd th' unpleasing tale
And cast o'er every fault Oblivion's veil,
Confessed thro' every fault thy deeds to shine
And owned the virtues of Compassion thine!

Saw mild Benevolence her wand disclose
And touch thy heart at ev'ry sufferer's woes;
Saw meek-eyed Charity thy steps attend
And guide thy hand the wretched to befriend.
Go, ask the breast that teems with mournful sighs,
Who wiped the sorrows from Affliction's eyes —
Go, ask the wretch in want and sickness laid,
Whose goodness brightened once Misfortune's shade!

Oh! Snatch me hence to some sequest'red scenes,
To arching grottoes and embow'ring greens,
Where scarce a ray can pierce the leafy shade,
Where scarce a footstep marks the dewy glade,
Where pale-hued Grief, her secret dwelling keeps,
Where the chill blood with lazy horror creeps,
Where awful Silence spreads her noiseless wing,
And Sorrow's harp may tune the dismal string —
Or rather lead my steps to distant plains
Where closing earth enfolds her last remains:
What time the moon displays her silver beam,
And groves and floods reflect the milder gleam:
When Contemplation broods with thoughts profound
And fairy visions haunt the sylvan ground.
Lo! Fancy now, on airy pinions spread
With scenes ideal hovers o'er my head.
I see — I see! more pleasing themes arise —
What mystic shadows flit before my eyes!
Imagination paints the sacred grove,

The place devote to poetry and love.
Here grateful poets hail the actors' name
And pay the rightful tribute to their fame;
Around their tomb, in generous sorrow mourn,
And twine the laurels o'er the favoured urn.

Me thinks I view the last sepulchral frame
That bears inscrib'd her much lamented name —
See! to my view the Drama's sons displayed!
What laurel'd phantoms crowd the awful shade!
First of the choir immortal, Shakespeare stands,
Whose searching eye all nature's scene demands;
Bright in his look celestial spirit blooms
And Genius o'er him waves her eagle plumes.

Next tender Southern, skill'd the soul to move,
And gentle Rowe who tunes the breast to love;
The witty Congreve near with sprightly mien;
And easy Farquhar with his lighter scene;
A numerous train of bards the shrine surround,
In tragic strains and comic love renown'd.
See on the tomb yon pensive form appear,
Heave the full sigh and drop the frequent tear.
The garments loose her throbbing bosom show,
Dispers'd in air her careless tresses flow;
Round her pale brow a mystic wreath is spread;
A gloomy cypress nods above her head.
See! while her hand a solemn lyre sustains
Her trembling fingers make the languid strains,
Soft to the touch the vocal strings reply

And tune the notes to answer every sigh.
She, child of grief! at human misery weeps,
At every death her dismal vigil keeps
But chief she mourns when fate's relentless doom
Gives wit and beauty victims to the tomb.
Her lyre their merits and their loss proclaim
(A mournful task!) and Elegy her name,
Now bending o'er the pile she vents her moan
And pours these sorrows on the senseless stone.

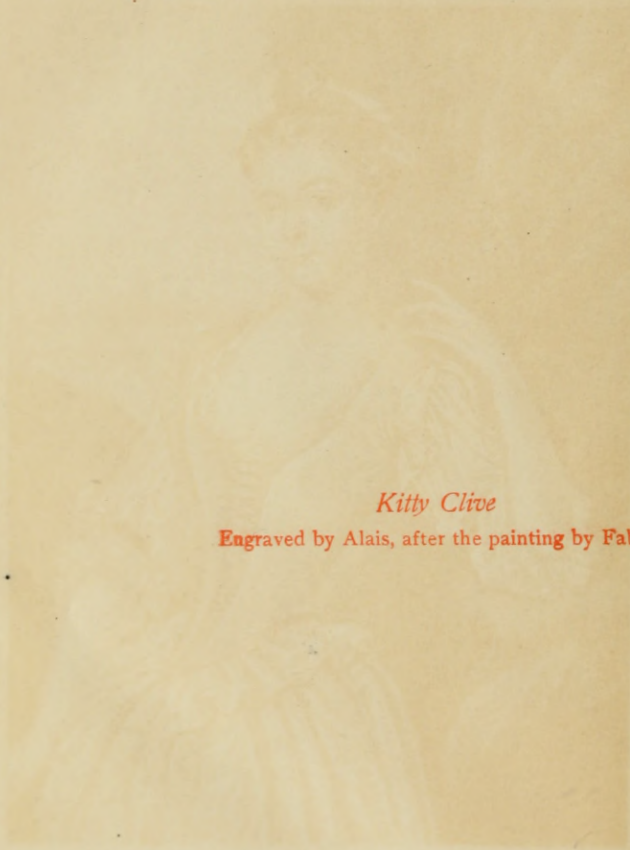
Ah! lost, for ever lost the breath that warm'd,
The wit that ravish'd and the mien that charm'd,
Here sleeps, beneath, the fairest of the fair,
The Grace's darling and the Muse's care!
Who once could fix a thousand gazers' eyes,
Now cold and lifeless, unregarded lies!
Who once the soul in bonds of love detain'd
Now lies, alas! in stronger bonds restrain'd.
Pale death has rifled all her pleasing store,
And nature loath's a form so loved before.
Is there a fair whose features point the dart,
Charm the fix'd eye and fascinate the heart —
Behold! what soon disarms the childish sting
And plucks the wanton plume from Cupid's wing!
Then boast no longer wit's fallacious store,
The sweets of sprightly converse boast no more.
Those lips so fram'd to each persuasive art
No more shall touch the ear and win the heart.
Let Beauty here her transient blessing weigh;
Let humbled Wit her pitying tribute pay;

Let female Grace vouchsafe the kindly tear —
Wit, Grace, and Beauty once were centred here!
Ye sacred Bards who tuned the drama's lays,
Here pay your incense of distinguished praise.
She gave your scene with every grace to shine,
She gave new feeling to the nervous line,
Her beauties well supply'd each tragic lore
And showed those charms your muse but feign'd before!
Here, round her shrine, your votive wreaths bestow,
Around her shrine eternal greens shall grow.
The listening groves shall learn her name to sing
And zephyrs waft it on their downy wing,
Till every shade these doleful sounds return
And every gale in sullen dirges mourn!
The mourner ends with sighs; her hand she rears
And with her vesture dries her gushing tears.
Behold! each bard the soft contagion feels,
From every eye the trickling sorrow steals.
See nature's son lament her hapless doom —
See Shakespeare bending o'er his favourite's tomb!
Each shadow-form declines his awful head,
And scatters roses on the funeral bed.
In slow procession round the shrine they move,
And chant her praises through the tuneful grove.

Farewell, the glory of a wond'ring age!
The second Oldfield of a sinking stage!
Farewell the boast and envy of thy kind

A female softness and a manly mind!
Long as the Muses can record thy praise
Thy fame shall last till far succeeding days;
While Wit survives thy name shall ever bloom
And wreaths unfading flourish round thy tomb!
While thus I tune the plaintive notes in vain,
For her whose worth demands a nobler strain,
Lo! to my heart some warning Genius cries —
Attempt not, swain, beyond thy flight to rise.
Shall thy weak skill attempt to raise our woes
Or paint a loss that every bosom knows?
'Tis not thy lays can teach us tears to shed
What eye refrains — for WOFFINGTON is dead!

MRS. CATHERINE CLIVE



Kitty Clive

Engraved by Alais, after the painting by Faber

PREFACE

THE task of calling up the images of departed actors who have passed beyond the recollection of even the oldest playgoers seems all but hopeless. With the most diligent examination of contemporary impressions the result is barren enough; for too often the reporter, supposing he have felt the inspiration, lacks the power to reproduce his impressions. It indeed needs ability of the highest order to touch this instrument; and it may be said that we have but two critics who have left breathing portraits of the actors of their time, namely, Colley Cibber and Charles Lamb. Language fails, save in the case of such masters, to give an idea of the style, the sympathetic graces, and the indefinable charm which render an actor popular, and secure him his hold over an audience; and this, though not exactly described, is shadowed forth in the magical lines of Shakespeare:

"As when the well graced actor leaves the scene,
The eye is often idly bent on him that enters next."

Here we recognise this mysterious awe left on our minds by the true player, — the strange undefined mystery, with the sense of a revelation beyond the hackneyed round of daily life. We must therefore resign ourselves in the case of departed performers to such accurate registers of their manner and methods, or what is vulgarly called "business," as diligent observers have collated. Of such records there is an abundance. It is not unnatural that the public, thus driven to content itself with this superficial and imperfect ideal, should have formed some hasty and erroneous conception of the old favourites. It reads as it runs — it has not time, nor is it able to make nice discrimination of character — all must be black or white. It has thus settled for itself that "Davy" Garrick was a close, clever, and knowing fellow; that "Peg" Woffington was a tender-hearted, rollicking Irish girl, — one of a class "who is no one's enemy but their own;" that Kemble was a solemn prig, always uttering stately periods; that the person with whom we are directly concerned — Mrs. Clive — was a pert being, of an impudent chambermaid cast. These popular judgments are more or less erroneous, for the three persons in question were almost the reverse of what they were supposed to have been. Woffington had nothing frivolous in her nature, but was saving, thoughtful, and conscientious in her profession, which she never neglected. Garrick was

liberal to a degree; Kemble often sat up whole nights over the bottle, and was excellent company. In the case of Mrs. Clive, it has been settled according to the conventional view, — that she was pert, impudent, and petulant. Doctor Doran is accountable for this use of misleading epithets, speaking with affectionate sympathy of imaginary "Pegs" and "Kittys" as though he had sat with them. We are introduced to Kitty Clive, and see her squaring her elbows and wrangling with Davy. Mrs. Clive was a rather prosaic person, one of those who make their profession and its earnings the first object of their life; she was plain, and had few adventures in her life; she had a warm temper, she knew her value to the theatre in vivacious, "bustling" characters, and resented any interference with her duties. From her writing she appears to have been ill educated, but she had what Doctor Johnson would have called a "strong bottom of sense." It has become a commonplace to speak of her bad spelling, but this defect mended with years. She will be found to be a genuine woman, sincere, firm, and fast in her friendships; while her downright character was exhibited in many episodes scarcely known, and which will be found interesting.

In the following pages will be found the first full and formal account of the life and adventures of this accomplished actress. Many new incidents have been discovered, while various curious little

episodes illustrating the independence or forwardness of our actress are here, for the first time, recounted. Some new letters are now given, together with much that illustrates her style of performance in various characters.

MRS. CATHERINE CLIVE

CHAPTER I.

The Raftor Family — Kitty Introduced to the Stage — Engaged by Cibber — Her Success in "Love in a Riddle" — Her Ballad Singing — Great Fiasco of the Piece — Her Marriage to Mr. Clive.

MRS. CATHERINE CLIVE, — or "Kitty Clive" as she was familiarly known to her associates — one of the brightest and most spirited of actresses, came of an Irish family named Raftor, settled at Kilkenny. The obligations of the English stage to that country are extraordinary. The names of Delane, Quin, Barry, Mossop, Sheridan, Macklin, the infant Roscius, Betty, Cooke, Macready, Barry Sullivan, with Woffington, Clive, Bellamy, Catley, Miss Farren, Miss O'Neil, and Mrs. Nesbitt, make up quite a galaxy of talent, and indeed leave little more to the other countries than the great leaders, Kembles, Siddons, and Kean, with our own living tragedian Irving. Not less remarkable are the

dramatic writers who could equip such a company with plays worthy of their talents: Steele, Farquhar, Goldsmith, Sheridan, O'Keefe, Sheridan Knowles, and many more. Scotland, so gifted in writers of song and fiction, is strangely deficient in this line.

Anything that we know of the Raftor family, and of the early life of its gifted daughter, we owe altogether to the worthy Chetwood, who was long connected with the Dublin Theatre, having written a little collection of sketches of the performers he knew. He possessed a quaint, simple style, as will be evident from his account of our heroine:

"This celebrated natural actress was the daughter of Mr. William Raftor, a gentleman born in the city of Kilkenny, Ireland. The father of her father was possessed of a considerable paternal estate in the county where he was born; but the parents of our actress being unhappily attached to the unfortunate King James the Second, the late revolution gave it, among many others, to the Crown. Mr. James Raftor, her brother, went over to Ireland some years ago, in order to solicit for his grandfather's fortune, but did not meet with success. Mr. William Raftor, the father, was tied to the law; however, when King James was in Ireland, he entered into his service, and after the decisive Battle of the Boyne, in the year 1690, he followed his master's fortune, and by his merit obtained a captain's commission in the service of

Louis the Fourteenth; but gaining a pardon with many other gentlemen in his condition, he came to England, where he married Miss Daniel, daughter of an eminent citizen on Fish Street Hill, with whom he had a handsome fortune. By her he had a numerous issue. Miss Catherine was born in 1711. She had an early genius for the stage, for she told me when she was about twelve years old, Miss Johnston (afterward Mrs. Theo. Cibber, another rising genius, if death had not overtaken her in the prime of youth) and she used to tag after the celebrated Mr. Wilks (her own words) wherever they saw him in the streets, and gape at him as a wonder. Miss Raftor had a facetious turn of humour and infinite spirit, with a voice and manner in singing songs of pleasantry peculiar to herself."

These touches bring the young girl vividly before us. The handsome fortune of Miss Daniel must have been speedily dissipated by Captain Raftor, for we shall find the whole burden of supporting him and his family cast upon the young actress, who was all through life remarkable for her family affection.

Through Miss Johnston, in whose company she used to "tag after" Mr. Wilks, — a pleasantly expressive phrase, — she became acquainted with Theo. Cibber, that extraordinary and impish member of the profession. Miss Johnston was Theo.'s first wife, and whose loss he bewailed.

"Should men say, for instance, I used my first dear and well-beloved wife, of ever blessed memory, J—n—y C——, with ill usage; should they affirm, that when her all pale and breathless corpse was laid in the coffin, and I, with sobs and tears and interjected sighs, had moaned to many a witness my too unhappy fate, yet that same night had a brace of Drurian doxies vile in the same house?"

There is an account given by Lee Lewes of "Kitty's" original connection with the stage, which has a curious probability, but which does not fit with the received accounts.

"She was originally," he says, "servant to Miss Eleanor Knowles, afterward Mrs. Young, mother to the present Sir George Young and Mr. Thomas Young, who in 1774 came out at Covent Garden Theatre in 'Macheath,' which he performed some nights with much celebrity. When Mrs. Clive lived with Mrs. Knowles, who then lodged at Mrs. Snell's, a fan painter in Church Row, Houndsditch, Mr. Watson, many years box-keeper at Drury Lane and Richmond, kept the Bell Tavern, directly opposite to Mrs. Snell's. At this house was held the Beefsteak Club, instituted by Mr. Beard, Mr. Dunstall, Mr. Woodward, etc. Kitty Raftor, being one day washing the steps of the house, and singing, the windows of the club-room being open, they were instantly crowded by the company, who were all enchanted with her natural grace and

simplicity. This circumstance alone led her to the stage, under the auspices of Mr. Beard and Mr. Dunstall." I have given the above anecdote as I received it from Mr. Thomas Young.

There is in this an air of possibility, but it will be seen that there are improbabilities. It is unlikely that the daughter of a gentleman and an officer would go out as a servant or wash steps. Nor was the club in question likely to have its meetings so far east as Houndsditch. It may be, however, that there is a foundation for the story, and that the girl was in place of service, as companion perhaps, and was overheard singing by the actors in question. Such legends are often questioned, but there is generally some basis of truth in them.

Scarcely desirable as an acquaintance for a young girl was Theo. Cibber's sister Charlotte, afterward Mrs. Clarke, — a strange, wild, half-mad creature, — who had a disastrous fate which she herself has recounted.

"These talents," adds Chetwood, "Mrs. Theo. Cibber and I (we were all at that time living together in one house) thought a sufficient passport to the theatre — we recommended her to the laureate." Her teacher in music was the luckless Henry Carey, who is claimed by his friends to have been the author of "God Save the King" — or Queen — as it may be. He is better known as the author of the ever popular "Sally in Our

Alley," which pleased even the correct taste of Mr. Addison, and which "Kitty" must have often warbled under his direction. We find her furnishing her talent to entertainments given for his benefit on several occasions.

Doctor Burney says she was a favourite with Handel, and was employed by him in his oratorios, singing in "Deborah." He, however, adds that she was quite unsuited to serious or sacred music, — which was indeed to be expected from a comic singer. In the Garrick Club there is an important portrait of her which represents her with a rather plain but good-humoured face, buxom in figure, with a low dress, and, which is characteristic of her taste, a scroll of music in her hand. This piece displays some of Milton's lines set by Handel.

It was natural that in such companionship she should soon have turned her eyes to the stage. "We recommended her to the laureate (Mr. Cibber)," says Chetwood, "whose infallible judgment soon found out her excellencies — and the moment he heard her sing, put her down in the list of performers at twenty shillings a week." This modest salary is mentioned as something handsome for a beginner, but it was good considering the times. Theatrical affairs at Drury Lane were not flourishing, and the prosperity which the three managers, Cibber, Wilks, and Doggitt, had built up during many years, was showing signs of decay. Still it

was an excellent school for her, as Wilks was there, whom in her girlish days she had "tagged after," with Mills, Harper, Cibber himself, Mrs. Booth, Mrs. Oldfield, and Miss Porter, all sterling actors, and trained in the best traditions. The progress of the young débutante was ratified. "After this, like a bullet in the air, there was no distinguishing the track till it came to its utmost execution," — the happy pointed phrase of the admiring Chetwood.

It has been stated that the first part allotted to the young postulant was that of the Page in "Mithridates, King of Pontus," a tragedy of the kind which Johnson happily styled the "Tig and Tiry" kind, from the usual Tigranes or Tiridates that figured in them. This part was specially garnished for her benefit, and we can suppose set out in the bill:

"Ismenes, page to Ziphanes (*with a song*)....MISS RAFTOR"

which she performed "in boy's clothes," says Chetwood, "with extraordinary applause." It is impossible, however, to discover the date of this successful début. We are not even certain of the year, though the traditions which fixed it to 1728 may be accepted. Even the laborious Geneste, whom little escaped, could find no bill or newspaper to throw light on the matter. His earliest official record is a performance of "The Tempest," on January 2, 1729, in which she played Dorinda. By searching more carefully I

have found some yet earlier performances. Thus, on October 12, 1728, we have this programme:

Not Acted this Season.

By His Majesty's Company of Comedians.

At the Theatre Royal in Drury Lane, To-morrow (being Saturday), the 12th day of October, will be presented a Tragedy call'd

OTHELLO, Moor of Venice.

The part of Othello to be performed by Mr. Elrington; Iago, by Mr. Cibber; Cassio, Mr. Williams; Roderigo, Mr. Roberts; Ludovico, Mr. Wm. Mills; Montano, Mr. Watson; Desdemona, Mrs. Thurmond; Emilia, Mrs. Butler; Bianca, Miss Raftor.

From this I fancy she must have appeared early in the year. On the 22d of the following month, Mr. Cibber brought out the whole strength of his establishment in a sort of pantomime, competing with "Mr. Lunn," who was exhibiting similar shows at the rival establishment.

N.B. — Not Acted these Two Years.

By His Majesty's Company of Comedians.

At the Theatre Royal in Drury Lane, this present Friday, being the 22 day of November (1728), will be presented a Comedy, call'd

ÆSOP:

The part of Æsop by Mr. Cibber.

To which will be added a New Dramatic Entertainment of Dancing, in serious and grotesque characters, call'd

PERSEUS AND ANDROMEDA,
WITH THE
RAPE OF COLUMBINE; or, THE FLYING LOVERS:
In five different interludes, viz.: three serious and two comic; the serious composed by Mons. Roger.

The part of Andromeda by Mrs. Booth; Perseus, Mr. Lally; Mercury, Mr. Essex; Jupiter, Mr. Essex; Medusa, Mr. Thurmond; Two Gorgons, Mr. Houghton and Mr. Burney: Followers of Perseus, Mr. Boval, Mr. Rainton, Mr. Houghton, Mr. Burney; Attendants on Andromeda, Mrs. Houghton, Miss Walter, Miss Lindar, Miss Robinson, sen.; The Houris of Sleep by Mrs. Houghton, Miss Robinson, sen., Miss Walter, Miss Lindar; Tritons, Mr. Thurmond, Mr. Essex, Mr. Houghton, Mr. Rainton; Cepheus, Mr. Fielding; Cassiopea, Mrs. Shireburn; Venus, Miss Biddy; Minerva, Miss Raftor; Juno, Mrs. Shireburn; Diana, Miss Smith; Sailors, Mr. Burney, Mr. Oates, Mr. Wright, Mr. Welteribb, Mr. Burnet, and Mr. Grey; Cupid, Miss Robinson, jun.; Doctor (Columbine's Father), Mr. Burney; Pierrot (Doctor's Man), Mr. Roger; Mezetius (Columbine's Lover), Mr. Ray; Harlequin (Mezetius' Man), Mr. Cibber, jun.; Squire (designed for Columbine), Mr. R. Welterilf; Clown (Squire's Man), Mr. Weaver; Columbine (in love with Mezetius) Miss Robinson, sen.; Mopsophil (Columbine's Maid), Mrs. Walter.

The Scenery, Machines, Habits, entirely new. All the Scenery painted by Mons. Devoto.[1]

Many of the performers, it will be seen, had to "double" and even "treble" the characters.

[1] During the elaborate preparations for this great show, young Leigh had his arm broke by the machinery being let down too rapidly at rehearsal. It will be noted that Fielding's name appears in the cast.

Minerva was not much of a part for Miss Raftor; but she was kept in company by so good a player as Mrs. Booth, who condescended to take part in this medley.

All readers know how potent was the effect of "His casual Sight of an old Play Bill" on Elia; and the faded characters of these frail records act like a spell, bringing us all into touch with the spirits of departed players. Here is another connected with the opening of the young actress's career:

ACTED BUT ONCE THESE TEN YEARS.

At the particular Desire of several Persons of Quality. By His Majesty's Company of Comedians.

AT the Theatre Royal in Drury Lane, on Monday, the 29th day of July, will be reviv'd a Comedy, call'd

WHIG AND TORY: OR, THE DOUBLE DECEIT.
Revis'd by H. Aulius.

The Part of Sir John Indolent, by Mr. Griffin; Young Indolent, Mr. Cibber, jun.; Reyard, Mr. Watson; Sir Ronald Heartfree, Mr. Covey; Young Heartfree, Mr. Roberts; Philip, Mr. Berry; Cobblecase, Mr. Bridgwater; John, Mr. Fielding; Annita, Mrs. Butler; Charlotte, Mrs. Heron; Maria, Miss Raftor; Tamwoud, Mrs. Shirburn.

With the original Prologue, to which, by desire, will be added the Opera call'd

PHŒBE; OR, THE BEGGAR'S WEDDING.

With entertainment of Dancing. Between the Play and the Opera will be performed a piece of Music on the Violin by Mr. Clarke, accompanied by Mr. Magnes on the Harpsi-

chord. Also a Voluntary by Mr. Magnes alone, being the first time of his performance in publick.

At Common Prices. To begin exactly at Seven o'clock.

N. B. — The house is extraordinarily cool. Plans to be had at Mr. Cook's, the Boxkeeper, in the Play House Passage. Printed Books of the Opera, as it is now performed, will be sold at the Theatre at 6d each. — 1729.

During this, her first season, we found her performing Honoria in "Love Makes a Man," on January 26, 1729; Valleria in "The Rovers," on May 1st; in "Wit Without Money," on May 3d, where she is set down as Mrs. Raftor; in "Duke and No Duke," on August 5th; as Arethusa in "The Contrivances;" and as Kitty in "The Oxford Jilt," on January 9, 1730. On February 10th, she appeared as Rosella in "The Constant Couple;" but it was not till August 6, 1731, that she made her first great hit as Nell in a version of "The Devil to Pay," altered and adapted by Coffey, where her boisterous vivacity made such an impression, not merely on the public, but on the management, that her salary was raised. In this part she became a prime favourite of the public. There were plenty of songs, and her rough, rattling, coarse humour in "The Cobbler's Wife" was much relished.

In a company which included such great performers, excellent lessons were to be learned. She there saw performed some of the most sterling pieces. She was given what seems to have

been her first serious character, on January 2, 1729, when the "Tempest" was played, she taking the part of Dorinda, Mrs. Booth playing Miranda to Wilks's Ferdinand; but beyond this she seems to have played but seldom, though she must have appeared often. For almost every night we find the advertisement: "With an entertainment of music and dancing." Thus on October 30, 1729, "The Stratagem," that is "The Beaux Stratagem," was played, in which Oldfield and Porter had parts — and which was followed by "select pieces of music" between the acts. Her characters during the rest of the season were Honoria in "Love Makes a Man;" on January 26th, Valleria in "The Rover," or "What D'ye Call It; with a song by Miss Raftor." On May 21st she also appeared in the version of "The Country Wife," and as Arethusa in a one-act farce, with several new songs. On January 9, 1730, she played the congenial part of Kitty, the Oxford Jilt, in the "Humours of Oxford." In that month, also, "The Tempest" was revived, on what was considered a scale of magnificence, "with scenes, machines, and other decorations suitable to the play," — and among these attractions so "suitable to the play," were the following: "A Dance of the Four Winds, a Dance of Infernal Spirits, as performed before the Grand Signior, by the Eunuchs of the Seraglio, at the Bairiam Feast (!). Also the song of 'Dear Pretty Youth,' as com-

posed by the late Mr. Henry Purcell, to be sung in the character of Dorinda by Miss Raftor." This wretched stuff shows to what the managers could condescend to draw an audience. But on the production of a new piece by the manager, Colley Cibber, she was to have her first experience of the unruly manners of an audience.

Her bearing on this disastrous occasion was becoming her character and conscientious spirit. "I remember," Chetwood tells us, "the first night of 'Love in a Riddle' (which was murdered the same year), which the hydra-headed multitude resolved to worry without hearing, a custom with authors of merit, when Miss Raftor came on in the part of Phyllida; the monstrous roar subsided, a person in the stage-box next to my post, called out to his companion in the following elegant style: 'Zounds! you take care, or this charming little devil will save all!'" This as we have seen, she could not do. The Prince of Wales was present on the second night, but was no restraint on the turbulence of the audience. The piece, however, being cut down and shortened, later became popular and was often acted. There figured in it a "concealed courtier" played by Cibber himself, with the inevitable Damon and Corydon. In 1734 she was painted in the same character, by Van Bleeck, and a large mezzotint was published from the picture, exhibiting a graceful pastoral figure, with a face full of interest, if not pretty.

A writer who knew her, and whose recollections stretched back a long way, describes her pastoral air exactly: "At this period the sprightliness and vivacity of her disposition, and an appearance scarce more than infantine, pointed her out as the proper representative of parts in which youth and simplicity were to be personated." [1] This air of infantine innocence and simplicity is conveyed in the portrait.

DAMON AND PHYLLIDA.

CHARACTERS.

Arcus, a nobleman of great possessions in Arcadia	Mr. Winstone
Ægon (his friend)	Mr. Cole
Corydon, an old Shepherd . . .	Mr. Turbutt
Simon } Simple brothers, in love with	Mr. Miller
Mopsus } Phyllida	Mr. Oates
Damon, an inconstant	Mr. Stoppelaer
Phyllida, daughter to Corydon . .	Mrs. Clive [2]

The whole piece seems to have been written to bring out the young actress's powers. Most of the songs, which are set to old English tunes, are allotted to her, and seem to anticipate our music hall ditties. Thus:

What woman could do, I have tried, to be free,
Yet do all I can,
I find I love him, and though he flies me,
Still — still he's the man

[1] *European Magazine*, 1784.

[2] This is a later cast of characters, when the title of the piece had been altered.

They tell me at once, he to twenty will swear:
When vows are so sweet, who the falsehood can fear?
So when you've said all you can,
Still — still he's the man.

And again:

Give over your love, you great loobies,
I hate you both — you sir, and you too;
Did ever a brace of such boobies
The lass that detests them pursue?
Prepare then to hear my last sentence —
Before I'd wed either, much rather
I'd stand on the stool of repentance,
And want for my bantling a father!

In later editions there is a pretty little etching by Van der Gucht, a well-known theatrical portrait painter, of Mrs. Clive in character, as a shepherdess, with crook, garlands, and a low dress.

Mr. Cibber thus relates the story of his fiasco:

"After the vast success of that new species of dramatic poetry, 'The Beggar's Opera,' the year following I was so stupid as to attempt something of the same kind upon quite a different foundation, that of recommending virtue and innocence, which I ignorantly thought might not have a less pretence to favour than setting greatness and authority in a contemptible light. But behold how fondly I was mistaken! 'Love in Riddle' (for so my new-fangled performance was called) was vilely damn'd and hooted at as so vain a presumption in the idle cause of virtue could deserve. Soon after this prohibition my performance was to come upon

the stage at a time when many people were out of humour at the late disappointment, and seemed willing to lay hold of any pretence of making a reprisal. Great umbrage was taken that I was permitted to have the whole town to myself, by this absolute forbiddance of what they had more mind to have been entertained with; and some few days before my bauble was acted I was informed that a strong party would be made against it; this report I slighted, as not conceiving why it should be true, and when I was afterward told what was the pretended provocation of this party, I slighted it. The report it seems that had run against me was this: That, to make way for the success of my own play, I had privately found means, or made interest, that the second part of 'The Beggar's Opera' might be suppressed. I had not considered, poor devil! that, from the security of a full pit, dunces might be critics, cowards valiant, and apprentices gentlemen! Whether any such were concerned in the murder of my play, I am not certain; for I never endeavoured to discover any one of its assassins; I cannot afford them a milder name, from their unmanly manner of destroying it. 'Tis true it faintly held up its wounded head a second day, and would have spoke for mercy, but was not suffered. Not even the presence of a royal heir apparent could protect it. But then I was reduced to be serious with them; their clamour then became an insolence,

which I thought it my duty, by the sacrifice of any interest of my own, to put an end to. I therefore quitted the actor for the author, and stepping forward to the pit, told them that since I found they were not inclined that this play should go forward, I gave them my word that, after this night, it should never be acted again; but that in the meantime I hoped they would consider in whose presence they were, and for that reason, at least, would suspend what further marks of their displeasure they might imagine I had deserved. At this there was a dead silence, and, after some little pause, a few civilised hands signified their approbation. When the play went on, I observed about a dozen persons of no extraordinary appearance sullenly walked out of the pit; after which, every scene of it, while uninterrupted, met with more applause than my best hopes had expected. But it came too late: Peace to its manes!"

After this scene, there followed some monotonous years, during which she was learning her profession, appearing almost every night. Such diligence and industry soon attracted attention. We find Aaron Hill, one of the popular playwrights, the author or adapter of ponderous tragedies, in his "Zara," proposing to aid in bringing her forward, classing her with Griffin and Harper. "I will be sure," he wrote in January, 1733, "to write for you such a farce as Mr. Booth described, and you shall have it in a day or two. I had a

thought that came in my head last night, that will take into the compass of an act, the different humour and strength of Harlequin, Mr. Stoppelaer, Miss Raftor, Mr. Griffin, and Mr. Harper." He added, that one great cause of want of success is that "things are not prepared on purpose to show the various talents in the company."

The attractive Miss Raftor, when she had been two or three years on the stage, was now to captivate a sober gentleman of good family, who married her. This was Mr. George Clive, a barrister without practice, brother to Sir Edward Clive, one of the barons of the exchequer, and nephew to another judge of the same family. It was "a good match," the Clives being an old Hereford family; the famous Robert, Lord Clive, was second cousin to Mr. George Clive. The marriage is said to have taken place in 1732, but the exact date is not known. The bills, however, seem to furnish some evidence, for we find that on October 3, 1733, "Rule a Wife and Have a Wife" was performed, in which "Miss Raftor" played; while on the 5th she appears of a sudden as "Mrs. Clive, formerly Miss Raftor." We might fairly assume that on the intermediate day, when she did not perform, the ceremony took place. The significant play chosen for the occasion seems to point to something of the kind.[1] Yet we might have

[1] When Mr. Charles Kean married Miss Tree, in Dublin, both played in "The Honeymoon" on the day of the marriage.

a suspicion that in the case of mésalliance as this, certainly Mr. Clive would not have been in such a hurry to have it so promptly proclaimed to the world; and it may be that this change of name was in consequence of the separation which speedily followed the marriage.

CHAPTER II.

Struggle with Mrs. Cibber for the Part of "Polly" — How the Town Amused Itself with Their Contentions — The Revolt against Manager Highmore; "Kitty's" Straightforward Behaviour — The Praises of Fielding and Others — Separates from Mr. Clive; Visits Dublin.

ALL through her course, our actress showed herself combative and even contentious, whenever she fancied that "her rights" were encroached upon. Conscious of the scrupulous fashion in which she did her duty to the public, she claimed that the same regard should be paid to her by her employers; and when these attempted to take advantage of her good nature, she was as spirited in resisting such encroachments as the most troublesome of her sex. We find her almost from the commencement engaged in some conflict with managers, or else in vigorously resisting the attempt of some other performer to encroach upon her privileges. But when she came to be enlisted under the fair, firm, and equitable rule of Garrick, we hear no more of these troubles, and she settled down into the painstaking, conscientious actress, thinking

only how she could best perform her duties to the public, to the theatre, and to herself.

We have spoken of the difficulty of calling up before us the particular charm and gift which has made an actor popular in his generation. But in the case of the captivating Mrs. Susannah Cibber, we can realise perfectly what a tender, sympathetic performer she was. Her letters are those of a charming unobtrusive woman, full of a gentle raillery and subdued sorrow. The daughter of an accomplished musician, Arne, she herself possessed musical gifts of no common order; and her eagerness to make a figure in this department was to bring about a serious quarrel with so redoubtable an antagonist as Mrs. Clive. These two eminent ladies were now to be in conflict, struggling for the possession of a favourite character.

The extraordinary success of the "Beggar's Opera" at Lincoln's Inn Fields, with the singular interest excited by the sympathetic character of Polly, whose representative had won the coronet of a duchess by her performance, made every actress long for the opportunity of distinguishing herself in so taking a character. Mrs. Clive was "in possession" of the part at Drury Lane, but it was naturally felt that a good voice and a piquant style were not all the qualities requisite for a perfect Polly. The whole cast of the character is sad and touching, as will be seen from the description given by Mr. Cambridge to Boswell.

"It was saved," he said, "on the first night by the song, —

"'O ponder well, be not severe;'

the audience being much affected by the innocent looks of Polly when she came to these two lines, —

"'For on the rope that hangs, my dear,
Depends poor Polly's life.'"

There could have been little of this kind of sympathy furnished by the vivacious Kitty, who would naturally emphasise, in her way, the more farcical portions. In 1736, unluckily, Mrs. Cibber conceived a wish to perform Polly, and at the same time oust the actual possessor of the part. The hubbub that followed was inconceivable; Mrs. Clive appealed to her friends in the town, Mrs. Cibber did the same. But this ill feeling gradually developed from mere "clashing," into perfect animosity. "No two women of high rank," says Davies, "ever hated one another more unreservedly than these great dames of the theatre. But though the passions of each were as lofty as those of the first duchess, yet they wanted the courtly art of concealing them."

These claims of Mrs. Cibber were at a later period very unfairly pressed, and the honest Clive was often put aside to gratify her whim. Thus in March, 1755, when the comedy of "Rule a Wife" was brought out, Mrs. Cibber insisted

on having the light, lively part of Estifania, though Mrs. Clive, "as the superior comic actress of the theatre," was really entitled to it. The manager, too, wished to see her in it, though, as Davies suspected, he and Woodward secretly wished to keep her "out of it." The gay ladies of comedy, however, were surely not in her line, for she lacked the refinement and delicacies, though not the spirit, necessary to the part.

"When Mrs. Cibber was cast for Polly," wrote Victor to Theo. Cibber, nigh twenty years later, "she was very young, handsome, and an approved good singer. She had every requisite to make the best Polly that had ever appeared, and so had Mrs. Clive for Lucy. It would undoubtedly have been a fine entertainment so performed; but Clive was there in possession of the public voice, — she was disgusted at the thought of leaving Polly, and lodged her complaint. What a storm was raised! but their favourite, right or wrong, was to be supported, though against judgment and common sense. I remember I was one of your friends that advised you to give it up — your wife was then new to the stage, and the match was perfectly unequal, and so the only opportunity of seeing the 'Beggar's Opera' in perfection was lost."

"I find," says Fielding, speaking in the character of Mrs. Cibber's husband, the little viper "Theo.," "that by our theatrical squabbles and

altercations we make as much amusement to the town in a morning as by our performance in an evening. The contentions for the part of Polly between Mrs. Clive and my late — I was going to say wife — but a late woman who was called by many a name, — that contest, I remark, furnished a copious topic for conversation, argument, and publication, and ended with noise and uproars in the playhouse. The consequence of all these addresses has been this: the town is called into the playhouse, as the *dernier ressort*, to judge of things." This has always been the case with that supersensitive and touchy corps, who, on the slightest assumed affront or injury, carry all their dirty linen to the market and wash it there before the amused crowd.

So ludicrous was the contention between the two angry ladies, that Woodward, then (1736) engaged at Lincoln Inn Fields, brought out an apropos piece on the subject, entitled:

THE BEGGARS' PANTOMIME;
OR, THE CONTENDING COLUMBINES.

The printed version of which he dedicates to the two actresses "who had a violent contention for Polly."

Here the two columbines are seen to contend with each other for the part; and no doubt burlesqued the manner of the actresses. Thus:

"[*A Beggar enters in a hurry.*]

Beg. Mr. Prompter, Mr. Prompter, [*enter Prompter*] What the devil is the meaning of this step; have you a design to ruin me?

Prompt. I assure you 'tis not my fault. Mrs. Roberts and Mrs. Hamilton are quarrelling who shall be first columbine. They scolded as long as they had breath, and now they have set themselves down to send letters to the public papers to inform them of this ill usage."

Woodward, however, apologised in his preface for the liberty he took: "When I publicly declare this trifling piece was meant only to promote the theatre to which I belong, I hope you will have more good nature than to imagine I designed to affront two ladies I am utterly a stranger to. Your paper was making such a bustle about the town, and its being so much the public talk of coffee-houses, I thought it no bad scheme to make use of the opportunity, and introduce something like your contention on the stage. I immediately made use of the subject." He adds that the whole was written, mounted, and produced within ten days.

A ballad, too, in the strain of "Chevy Chase" was also published, ridiculing the squabble:

"Heaven prosper long our noble king,
Our lives, and save us all;
A woeful quarrel lately did
In Drury Lane befall.
To charm the pit with speech and song
Dame Cibber took her way:

Players may rue who are unborn
The quarrel of that day.
Cibber, the syren of the stage,
A vow to heaven did make,
Full twenty nights in Polly's part
She'd make the playhouse shake.
When as these tidings came to Clive,
Fierce Amazonian dame:
'Who is it thus' in rage she cries,
'Dares rob me of my claim?'
With that she to the greenroom flew,
Where Cibber meek she found;
And sure if friends had not been by,
She had fell'd her to the ground."

(January, 1737.)

Fielding, too, in his "Historical Register," produced in the same year, makes merry over the ladies and this contest. One of the characters, Sowrvit, asks:

"Hey day! what's become of your two *Pollys?*

Medley. Damned — Sir, damned! They were damned at my first rehearsal: for which reason I have cut them out, and, to tell you the truth, I think the town has honoured them enough, with talking of them for a whole month."

Even Chetwood, her admirer, had his little fling, in the "Dramatic Congress," 1743, where he makes Kitty give a characteristic account of herself:

"*Dash.* Good manners oblige us to enquire on ladies first; therefore, Miss Kitty, we shall be glad to know what

you have to allege against the Basha, and submit it to yourself, whether he has not always behaved with the strictest regard to your interests.

Kitty. As to his regarding my interest he never did it in particular, but when it very largely conduced to his own. I look after the stage as a very precarious situation. I have, by my assiduity, endeavoured to please the town. If ever I met with any favour it was from *them* not *him;* . . . Did he not make use of all the arts he was master of to depreciate me with the audience? Witness the contest he created about *Polly*, when Callista and I stood the shock of the audience alternately for several nights together. When Sylvia was engaged to him he endeavoured as much to set her up as my rival, but the town would not permit it."

Dash urges in reply that the manager's motive might have been "to display the merits of the two ladies to an equal degree. He certainly increased *Kitty's* salary so extravagantly as to make it much above any woman's on the stage now."

Kitty answers, "Not near so much esteem as he showed for his foreigners, who, at the weekly expense of near eighty pounds, convinced him that they were almost useless, whilst I and others, at a much lower rate, contributed to the payment of them: notwithstanding which, he is about lowering the salary he previously agreed with me for, and that before he has discharged the little arrears due to me.

Dash. Hold, madam, do you really think he could reasonably afford to give you the salary he did.

Kitty. As you have been so free with me, I must as freely tell you that I wonder you can enter into a league with one, who, though he would be thought a gentleman, seduced several of your performers from you.

Dash. O child, it is fair gaming.

Kitty. Well, I'll not be lowered whilst I am capable of meriting what I have had all along, and that's my resolution."

Yet, in spite of the ill-will which such disputes must have engendered, when the two ladies were engaged at Drury Lane in 1747, under Garrick, we find Mrs. Cibber (on Sept. 17th) performing the coveted Polly with great effect, and her rival Clive taking the part of Lucy; which, however, must have fitted her far better. When Mrs. Cibber was gone, she also tolerated one of her friends, Miss Edwards, — afterward Mrs. Mozeen, — in the same character. Nay, before this, she was content not to figure in the piece at all, when Mrs. Pritchard took the part of Lucy to Mrs. Cibber's Polly. No better proof could be given of the complaisance of this worthy actress, whenever the interests of the theatre called for it.

We next find our heroine concerned, to some extent, in a revolt against the managers, a rather entertaining episode, in which she acquitted herself with moderation and credit. Actors are mostly a sensitive and unreflecting race, and are usually drawn into such rebellions in consequence of some sense of fancied injury. But Mrs. Clive here was to show her usual good sense.

After the happy, judicious reign of Cibber and his colleagues, it was the fortune of Drury Lane Theatre to pass from one bankrupt manager to another, under whose dissipated rule the whole

fell into disorder. The first of these rash adventurers was "John Highmore, Esq., of Hampton Court," a gentleman with £800 a year. Having offered, by way of frolic, to play Lothario for one night, — it was for a wager at White's Club, with Lord Limerick, — he was so transported with the applause he received and the great receipts that he at once purchased shares in the theatre, and became a manager. At this time, by a curious oversight, the players were not bound to have any agreements or "articles," and they could leave almost without notice. In his company was that truly detestable being, Theo. Cibber, who seems to have been a bad son, a bad husband, a bad actor, who was always plotting some intrigue, and finally lost in a storm, sailing to Ireland with a whole cargo of properties, to say nothing of "Madox, the great wire-rope dancer." Before Highmore had been in office a fortnight, Theo. had spirited up a revolt against the manager; and, though his own father had just been paid £3,000 for his share, the son did his best to get possession of the theatre, and drive out the managers. There were probably real grievances to complain of, but nothing to warrant such a rebellion. The principal players all joined him, such as old Mills, Johnson, Miller, Griffin, Harper, and Mrs. Heron. But we find that Mrs. Clive and Mrs. Horton, though they were dissatisfied, disdained to join in the revolt, and held by their master. The fact

that two women — Mrs. Wilks, the widow of her old theatrical idol, and Mrs. Booth — were in the direction may have contributed to this loyalty, of which Fielding expressed his admiration in the warmest terms.

"The part," he says,[1] "you have maintained in the present dispute between the players and patentees of 1733 is so full of honour, that had it been in higher life it would have given you the reputation of the greatest heroine of the age. You looked on the cases of Mr. Highmore and Mr. Wilks with compassion, nor could any promises or views of interest sway you to desert them; nor have you scrupled any fatigue (particularly the part which at so short a warning you undertook in this farce) to support the cause of those you imagined injured, and for this you have been so far from endeavouring to exact an exorbitant reward from persons little able to afford it, that I have known you offer to act for nothing, rather than the patentees should be injured by the dissensions of the audience."

There is something hearty in this testimony, which furnishes an admirable idea of the sterling, upright character of this woman. "In short, if honour, good gratitude, and good sense, joined with the most entertaining humour, are titles to public esteem, I think you may be sure of it." In this we have homage to her behaviour in a par-

[1] Preface to "The Intriguing Chambermaid," 1734.

ticular transaction — a warm and most genuine encomium; we feel that here is a thoroughly "good creature," spirited and ready to sacrifice her interest to her feelings. And he goes on: "But great a favourite as you are at present with the audience, you would be much more were they acquainted with your private character; could they see you laying out a great part of the profits which arise to you for entertaining them so well, in support of an aged father; did they see you, who can charm them on the stage with personating the foolish and vicious characters of your sex, acting in real life the part of the best wife, the best daughter, the best sister, and the best friend."

This is really an extraordinary testimony, and there is something exceedingly welcome in the portrait. The old Raftor supported by his promising daughter, with his broken family, is pleasant to think of. Thus we find her interesting character gradually filling in. It might almost be added that she was a good sister, too, for we find her brother at the same theatre, where she had, no doubt, got him engaged, and coupled with her in benefits, which he was certainly otherwise not entitled to. He did not emerge at all, and made no figure in his profession.

At the praise of "a good wife" the experienced theatrical reader may be inclined to pause and perhaps shake his head; for shortly after these

encomiums were uttered, she and her husband separated. Of the incident and its causes nothing is known, but they never came together again. Victor, who knew her well, hints that the fault was not hers, nor is it likely that it was; though it may be that her independent nature and temper would resent any presumed superiority on the ground of station. A blunt, sturdy woman, warm tempered also, would be unduly sensitive on so delicate a point, and perhaps scornful in reference to Mr. Clive's good family and "Baron Clive." We have only a single glimpse of this obscure gentleman, furnished by Taylor, the journalist:

"He was," he says, "a very learned and intelligent man, by all accounts; but without practice in his profession; he was therefore invited to become the domestic companion of Mr. Ince, a gentleman of fortune, and reputed to be the Templar in the club of the *Spectator*. Mr. Ince was well known to be a frequent contributor to that admirable periodical work. My old friend, the Rev. Richard Penneck of the British Museum, knew Mr. Ince, and told me that he retained the practice, as mentioned in the *Spectator*, of visiting the playhouse almost every evening, as long as his health and age would admit."

This acceptance of the post of "gentleman companion" shows him to have been rather "a poorish creature," — as Carlyle phrases it, — and his vivacious lady may have reproached him

with a similar tendency to live upon her earnings. This, however, is all matter of speculation.

While the seceders retired to the Haymarket, the deserted manager took some violent steps to force them back to their duty. Such was the historic case of the arrest of Harper, the player, etc. All ended in the return of the prodigals — who, it seems, in point of law, actually had a claim to possession of the lease of the theatre, though not to the patent, and it was so decided by the Court of King's Bench, on Nov. 12, 1733, upon an ejectment. Highmore, however, held the patent, without which they could do nothing, but the struggle and the cost of legal proceedings utterly ruined him. This, "added to his constantly failing audiences, was sufficient to destroy a much larger estate than his, and it was with the utmost difficulty he held out through the season. He was a man of humanity and strict honour; many instances fatally proved that his word, solemnly given, — which was his custom, — was sufficient for the performance, though ever so injurious to himself."

This in itself was a recommendation to our actress, and accounts for her loyalty through the crisis. "As the season," goes on Victor, "was advanced, he was reduced to the necessity of beating his drum for volunteers, — several recruits offered from strolling companies, but I remember none of any promise but Macklin. In this maimed

condition the business, of course, went tamely on." Poor Clive!

During the season of 1743, and thus early in her career, the impetuous spirit of the actress broke out on the score of some grievance in the distribution of parts in Fielding's "Wedding Day." The author could thus good-naturedly exhibit her peculiarities, — in some pleasant lines, — from which it will be seen that our actress, when roused, would express her displeasure in good round oaths:

"'Where is this scoundrel poet?
Fine work indeed! By —— the town shall know it.'
Fielding, who heard, and saw her passion rise,
Thus answered calmly: — 'Prithee, Clive, be wise,
The part will suit your humour, taste, and size.'
'Ye lie! ye lie! ungrateful as thou art,
My matchless talents claim the lady's part;
And all who judge, by J—— C——, agree,
None ever played the gay coquette like me.'
Thus said and swore the celebrated Nell."

Dublin was at this time a great nursery for the stage, and theatrical entertainments were in high vogue. It had two flourishing theatres and good companies, and the managers were always eager to engage new and rising talent. It was in the year 1741, when Garrick was to make the town "horn mad," that she accepted an engagement to go thither with Quin, Ryan, and a dancer, — Madame Chateneuf. They appeared at the thea-

tre in Aungier Street, and the season commenced with "a brilliancy never before known in Irish annals." She was "welcomed with the most uncommon civilities, and received the greatest advantages," which she acknowledged afterward in the warmest and most grateful terms.[1]

"Mr. Quin opened in his favourite part of Cato, to as crowded an audience as the theatre could contain. Mrs. Clive next appeared as Lappet in 'The Miser;' she certainly was one of the best that ever played it; and Mr. Ryan came forward in Iago to Mr. Quin's Othello. With such excellent performers we may naturally suppose the plays were admirably sustained. Perhaps it will scarcely be credited that so finished a comic actress as Mrs. Clive could so far mistake her abilities as to play Lady Townly to Mr. Quin's Lord Townly and Mr. Ryan's Manly, Cordelia to Mr. Quin's Lear and Mr. Ryan's Edgar, etc. However, she made ample amends by her performance of Nell, 'The Virgin Unmasked,' 'The Country Wife,' and Euphrosyne in 'Comus,' which was got up on purpose and acted for the first time in this kingdom.

"The 'Masque of Comus,' though one of the most beautiful pieces of poetry in our language, yet requires to be uncommonly supported to

[1] The Dublin folk have always been particularly cordial in welcoming players — even the wretched Mrs. Sumbel, who had a beautiful face.

render it pleasing to an English audience. But in this instance it was indeed a treat to the judicious. Mr. Quin spoke Comus; the Elder Brother was played by Mr. Ryan; Mrs. Clive, Euphrosyne, and the other characters were disposed of with great care and propriety. The celebrated Mr. Dubourg prepared the music, Pasquilino led the band, and the dances were executed by Monsieur Laluze, Mlle. Chateneuf, and others. This was allowed to be the best entertainment presented to the public for many years, and during the short time they had to stay, was repeated three times. As soon as Aungier Street Theatre closed, Mr. Ryan and Mrs. Clive returned to London."

CHAPTER III.

Revolt against Fleetwood, Headed by Garrick — Mrs. Clive Joins the Deserters — Her "Appeal to the Town."

ON her return she found the whole theatrical community in confusion. The manager of Drury Lane, having exhausted all his resources, both of money and chicanery, had been forced to withdraw, and, utterly broken and bankrupt, retired abroad, where he died in distress. A gay and wealthy gentleman named Fleetwood now came in, only twenty-one years old and enjoying £6,000 a year. He was described as being "agreeable in his person, and the qualities of his mind and amiableness of his disposition carried with them invincible attractions. He was affable and engaging in his address, which was the last and only remaining good quality he had kept with him till his death; and no doubt that would have vanished with the rest if he had not found it of constant use to him in his business with the world."

This neatly sarcastic touch came from Victor, a stage-manager, whom we have been quoting. It

was unfortunate for Mrs. Clive that she, after her sacrifices, found herself under the direction of another spendthrift, "though I am informed he came a ruined man into the management, and that he was for some years a gainer by his purchase gambling." The rough Macklin acted as his deputy and dealt with the performers, who were ground down, left with salaries unpaid, while mortgagees and bailiffs held the place. A money-lender named Pierson was the virtual controller of the theatre. He was favoured, however, by one happy stroke which might have done for him what the engagement of the obscure "Kean, from Dorchester," did for the broken Drury Lane Committee. Meanwhile his management staggered on.

The sudden rising of the star of Garrick, in this general gloom, is a story too well known to be more than alluded to here. He was fortunate in possessing that rare combination of administrative power — analogous to that of some great political minister in leading the House of Commons — with extraordinary histrionic ability, a happy union which is found in the most prominent actor of our day. The effect of two such powerful forces in a single person becomes almost irresistible. The new actor had taken service with Fleetwood, and had continued with him for about a year; but his sagacious eye soon saw that he was wasting his powers in such a position. Still he enjoyed what was then considered an enormous salary, as will be

seen from the Drury Lane list for the season of 1742–43.[1]

The total salary list was computed at about £4,000. The amount is, of course, calculated in the number of acting weeks, which seem to have been about thirty-five in the year. The treasurer added that, in this account, "no computation was made of gold tickets, which are sometimes very considerable." These "gold tickets" were presents to the amount of ten or twenty pounds, made by patrons or admirers on the occasion of a benefit.

With so handsome a salary, and a leading position at the first metropolitan theatre, it is likely that Garrick would have been contented. But he found it impossible to obtain his money; and he, with the other players, was disgusted at the introduction of vulgar shows; for "monsters" were hired from Sadler's Wells and the fairs, with rope dancers and tumblers. His salary at last was some six hundred pounds in arrears. Here the worm turned. In May, 1743, he positively de-

[1] Mr. Garrick, £630; with two clear benefits (one paying £50), £500; total, £1,130. Macklin, at nine guineas per week, and six guineas for his wife, £525; with a clear benefit (paying £50 to the house), £230; total, £755. Mrs. Woffington, at seven guineas a week, £364; and a clear benefit, say, £130; clothes, £50; total, £644. Mrs. Pritchard, at £7 10*s.* certain, £250; clear benefit, £180; clothes, £50; total, £480. Mrs. Clive, £15 15*s.* certain, £525; clear benefit, £200; clothes, £50; tickets at her benefit, as per agent, £21; total, £796.

clined to act, and absented himself for three weeks. Finding this step of no use, he planned the well-known "revolt."

What must have more immediately led to this step, was a rumour or a suspicion that the patentees had entered into a secret agreement or "cartel," to deal with the players in common; so that if a deserter applied to the other house, he was not to receive any increase of salary, or at least should only obtain what the managers had agreed to give. This put the players at their mercy, as there were only two houses to give them employment. Garrick's plan, as he unfolded it, was that they should all desert and set up for themselves; and he had been encouraged to believe that he could obtain a license from the Duke of Grafton to open the Opera House. Macklin, who was more or less *lièd* with the manager, suggested going to him first and announcing their purpose, which might bring him to terms, but Garrick was against this course. About a dozen of the leading performers joined in the revolt, including Havard, Barry, Mills, Macklin, Mrs. Pritchard, and Mrs. Clive. Application was made at once to the Duke of Grafton, who refused to grant the license. Fleetwood speedily filled up his thinned ranks with recruits from country companies. The prudent Garrick, seeing that the scheme had failed, at once opened negotiations for reconciliation with the manager, for himself and his friends. He was

favourably received, and was promised restoration; a few of the others were not taken back, but Fleetwood could now pick and choose. Macklin, whose conduct he considered treacherous in the extreme, was proscribed. This actor was furious with Garrick, whom he accused of betraying him and his friends, and he insisted that in honour, and also by the terms of their signed agreement, he was bound to sink or swim with the rest, — that all should be restored or all stand out. Garrick admitted this strict interpretation of the bond, but urged the reasonable view, that it was unfair that all the actors should starve for his sake. It was a matter clearly of compromise and indemnification, and he handsomely offered to pay him out of his own pocket six pounds a week, and secure from the manager an engagement at three pounds a week for Mrs. Macklin. But Macklin was a determined, rather turbulent being, with much of his countrymen's vindictiveness in dealing with injuries real or supposed. He would hear of nothing but the bond, and assailed Garrick in pamphlets in which the mildest phrases were "your treachery," "you have no notion of honour," etc. To which the other replied, *tout bonnement*, that "it was a falsehood." It ended by most of the revolted players being restored, though at lower salaries, but the wrong-headed Macklin was cast out. But there was to be another scapegoat, the intrepid Clive. She had indeed joined the revolt at its

early stage, for she could never brook ill-treatment, and it is characteristic that she should have chosen to stand by the poor, cheated players who had been cast off by the principals. We can see at once that her good nature was touched by the piteous appeal those unhappy victims now addressed to Garrick, now to Macklin, imploring them not to stand upon these punctilios, but to arrange matters for them, or their families would certainly starve. Our actress declined to follow Mr. Garrick in his comfortable compromise, though not unwilling to accept an engagement from the manager on her old terms.

For this natural proceeding she was pursued with much obloquy and abusive gossip, until she was at last driven to lay her story before the town and vindicate her behaviour. To this mode of appeal she was rather too much addicted, from a wish to stand well with her patrons. There accordingly appeared —

THE CASE OF MRS. CLIVE
Submitted to the Public,

a diminutive little pamphlet. It is well known that Kitty was deficient, not only in style, but even in spelling: so it is not unlikely that she was aided in this venture by Fielding or some literary friend; but the language is unmistakably hers, and there is one passage rather "Irish and

less nice," which comes perilously near to being "a bull." [1]

She began by saying bluntly, that the reason for her not acting that season was the advice of her friends. "Such appeals as the present," she went on to say, "were by some thought presuming and pertinent, but where injustice and oppression were concerned — this could never be a matter of indifference to the public — she appeals without affectation to her own claims on her regard of that public.

"I am the more encouraged to hope this from experience. It having been observed that those performers, who have had the happiness to please on the stage, and who never did anything to offend the public, when they have been injured by those who presided over theatres, have seldom, if ever, failed of redress upon representing the hardships they met with. If any think I treat this matter too seriously, I hope they will remember that, however trifling such things may appear to them, to me, who am so much concerned in them, they are of great importance, such as my liberty and livelihood depend on."

She then proceeds to explain the condition of the actors in reference to the managers. "They were quite helpless, as only two theatres were

[1] This little brochure is in the Museum, and is likely enough to be unique. I have not seen another, nor even the advertisement of another, in any catalogue.

authorised, and the managers, connected together, complained of the actors' salaries being too great, and accordingly a false account was published of them in the daily paper, by whom I will not say. Whether or no some particular salaries were so, I will not pretend to determine. But whether the expense of the theatre was too high or otherwise, it was not the refusal of the actors to submit to a reduction that drove them to secede, but the tyranny of the two managers." She then dwelt on her own particular hardship. When the revolters were obliged to return to their duty, she was offered by the manager of Drury Lane such terms as bore no proportion to what he gave other performers, or to those he had offered her at the beginning of the season. These she accordingly refused, and she applied to the other theatre, — "for I knew it had been settled by some sort of agreement that part of the actors were to go to Covent Garden, and others to Drury Lane." Yet though Covent Garden had before tempted her with high offers, and offered exactly the same terms she had found at Drury Lane, she was, however, persuaded to accept "some very little better," and had to submit to paying a sum of money for her benefit, though she had enjoyed one clear of all expense for nine years before.

"When I was fixed at this theatre, I determined to stay there; I did in all things which related to my profession submit entirely to the

manager's direction, and, with the help of other principal performers, did greatly promote his interest, as was evident from the audiences, after we went to act there; but I found by his behaviour, it was designed I should not continue with him, but return the next season to Drury Lane.

"The agreements betwixt that manager and me were verbal, but made before two gentlemen of character and fortune, on whom I must depend for the fulfilling of them: they were for one year. At the end of the acting season, the manager sent an office keeper to me with some salary that was due, who required a receipt in full. I told him a very great part of my agreement was yet due, and requested to see the manager, who came and acknowledged them, and promised to bring one of the gentlemen who was present at our engagements in a day or two and pay me; but he has not paid me," adds Kitty in her downright style, "nor have I ever seen him since, or as much as heard from him.

"It has always been a custom in theatres, that if any actor or actress was to be discharged, or their allowance lessened, they were acquainted with it at the end of the season. The reason of this will appear to be the giving them a proper notice to provide for themselves. This the manager of Covent Garden did to all his company whom he designed to discharge, or whose allowance was to be lessened, except to me, which

made me actually then conclude he determined I should continue with him till I was undeceived by his playbills with the names of other actresses in parts I used to perform. So that he has not only broke through the customs of the theatre, but those in practice almost everywhere, in dismissing me, and has done me a real injury in such an unprecedented act of injustice. For had I been informed of this design at the end of the season, I could have made terms to have acted in Ireland, where I had met with most uncommon civilities, and received very great advantages, which I shall ever remember with the utmost gratitude, and take this and every other opportunity to acknowledge.

. . . . . .

"It is pretended by the management that they have the same right to discharge an actor that a master has to turn away a servant, than which nothing can be more false and absurd; for when a master dismisses a servant there are many thousands besides to apply to, but when managers dismiss an actor, where are they to apply to? It is unlawful to act anywhere but with them. Necessity or inclination brings every one to the stage; if the former happens to be the case they will not readily find an employment, and if the latter they will not be fit for one, so that it will appear an act of great injustice and oppression. . . . But there is a very melancholy instance that the actor's

demands is not the reason of dismissing them, but the will of the manager alone. Since last season an actor and actress returned to Drury Lane, under such abatements as that manager thought proper, and such as were in no degree equal to their merit; and yet at the beginning of the season were dismissed after having been from their infancy on the stage, and having no other profession to live by, and very numerous families to support.

"The manager of Drury Lane, though he can't but know I am disengaged from the other theatre, has not made any application to me to act with him, which he has done to several others who quitted that stage at the time I did. The reasons which obliged me to leave him still subsist. He owes me a hundred and fifty pounds, twelve shillings, which he acknowledged to be justly due, and promised payment of it by last Christmas to a person of too great consequence to mention here, the greater part of it (which?) money I expended for clothes for his use. He offered me last season not near half as much as he afterward agreed to give another performer, and less than he gave to some others in his company, so that I must conclude that there is a design to distress me, and reduce me to such terms as I cannot comply with.

"I am sorry I am reduced to say anything in favour of myself; but I think I merit as much as another performer, and the managers are so de-

sirous to convince me of the contrary, I hope I shall be excused, especially when I declare that at this time I am not in the least vain of my profession.

"As to my performances, the audiences are the only and proper judges; but I may venture to affirm that my labour and application have been greater than any other performer on the stage. I have not only acted in almost all the plays, but in farces and musical entertainments; and very frequently two parts in a night, even to the prejudice of my health. I have been at great expense in masters for singing; for which article alone the managers give five and six pounds a week. My additional expenses in belonging to the theatre amount to upwards of one hundred pounds a year in clothes and other necessaries; and the pretended great salaries of ten and twelve pounds a week, which have been so artfully and falsely represented to the town, to the prejudice of the actors, will, upon enquiry, appear to be no more than half as much; since they performed last season, at the theatres, very seldom above three or four days a week.

"I have now finished all I proposed: I have shown in how aggravating a manner, without any reason assigned, I have been turned out of Covent Garden Theatre. The manager of Drury Lane, though he cannot but know what just reasons I had for quitting him, has never applied to me to

return, nor made the least excuse for not paying my arrears.

"The reason of my taking the liberty to communicate these things to the public is most earnestly to intercede for their favour and protection, from whom I have always met with great generosity and indulgence. For, as I have always declared in a letter published by me last year in the daily papers, that I had not a fortune to support me independent of my profession. I doubt not but it will appear I have made any considerable acquisition to it since, having not received two hundred pounds salary for acting in plays, farces, and singing; though other performers have received more than twice that sum. I have, in consideration of these hardships, been promised the protection of many ladies to whom I have the honour to be personally known, and will not doubt the concurrence of a public in receiving my performance in the best manner I am, at present, capable of, which I shall always gratefully acknowledge." — C. CLIVE.

Such was this pleasant and effective appeal — in which we seem to hear the actual tones of the sturdy actress.

This scene of confusion was made worse confounded by broils between the actors as well as between the rival houses. During the rebellion Mrs. Cibber proposed to give a benefit for the purpose of raising soldiers, which the manager of

Drury Lane received with some disgust. But it caused an uproar in the greenroom. "I was cursed," she says, "with all the elegance of phrase that reigns behind the scenes; and Mrs. Clive swore she would not play the part of Lucy." She accordingly transferred the scheme to the other house, where it was accepted and carried out with great spirit. There was certainly no love lost between these two ladies.

During the interval we find her appearing at the Haymarket Opera House, on the occasion of a "Concert of Vocal and Instrument Musick," given under the distinguished patronage of the Prince and Princess of Wales. Here she sang in company with Mr. Lowe and Miss Edwards. Her first appearance at Covent Garden was on December 7, 1743, when she performed Lappet in "The Miser," one of the usual chambermaids; with Ophelia on the 14th, followed by Nell, Polly, and other favourite characters.

At the various fairs held in London at Bartholomew and Southwark, it was the practice for some leading players to open booths, and perform popular plays. Mr. Fielding was one of these *entrepreneurs*, — indeed we find him performing himself. Here Mrs. Clive figured. "At the Booth of Fawkes Pinchbeck will be performed 'Britons, Strike Home;' Don Superbo Hispaniola Pistole, by Mrs. Cibber; Donna Americana by Mrs. Clive, The Favourite of the Town."

CHAPTER IV.

Mrs. Clive Engaged by Garrick — Her Style of Acting Described — Disappearance of "the Chambermaid" as a Character — Breadth of Acting — Her Quarrels with "Peg" Woffington — "Scenes" between the Ladies Described — Quarrels with Woodward — with Garrick — *Amantium Iræ.*

WHEN Garrick, in 1747, made his first venture as manager, thus taking the inevitable step to which every popular and engrossing actor is led, he gathered about him a strong and judiciously selected company. These, by his admirable training and firm rule, he moulded into an admirable company, whose effect on the English stage has been remarkable, suggesting the influence of the great Comédie Française in this country. In his corps were found Mrs. Cibber, Mrs. Pritchard, Macklin, Barry, Mrs. Woffington, and — to add brightness to the composition — the vivacious Mrs. Clive as "leading comick" (the old quaint phrase) or "singing chambermaid."

Being thus fixed in a well-regulated flourishing company, our actress fell into the ranks, performing a round of important characters, maturing her powers from practice, and, in Johnson's phrase, "increasing the public stock of harmless pleasure." In a company of such a kind the opportunities for

developing histrionic power are boundless; for the "stock" pieces brought forward at regular intervals belong to fixed "castes," and each character belongs to one regular performer. His or her special gifts become associated in the mind of the public with the particular part, — the appearance, the tones, and manner are curiously associated with it, — while a new performer appears strange and unfamiliar. It will be remembered how the late Mr. Phelps became thus so bound up, as it were, with the vigorous eccentricities of Sir Pertinax, as to make it almost impossible for another player to discharge the part. He was, in every point, the old gnarled, cantankerous Scotch baronet. It is astonishing in these times to find what a number of characters were thus undertaken by a well-established performer during the course of a long career. We find that Munden had a "list" that reached to over two hundred; Mrs. Clive's included nearly the same. But of these there are only a few in which she excelled, and which were regularly called for, and these did not exceed a dozen. There was Nell in "The Devil to Pay;" Flora, the waiting-maid, in "The Wonder," which, it was declared, she made almost as important as the leading character; Lady Bab, in the amusing "High Life Below Stairs;" Catherine, in "Catherine and Petruchio;" the vulgar Mrs. Heidleberg, in "The Clandestine Marriage."

It is now difficult to form any idea of the great

powers with which she held her audiences. There is no actress now on the stage of her peculiar *genre* — the type is lost; for the reason, we may presume, that the type of the vivacious, bustling, obstreperous lady has disappeared from the ranks of society. The course of manners would appear to have abolished high spirits as indecorous. Mrs. Jordan would seem to have been the last of the Irish, or hoydenish players. Davies, who had seen her often, and who had powers of critical analysis, tells us that "many dramatic pieces are now lost to the stage, for want of her animating spirit to preserve them," — a judicious remark of wide meaning. It explains why revivals of old comedies in our time fall so "flat." The actors, unfamiliar with many-shaded characters, have not the skill to interpret or fill them in. The performance has as bald and barren a result as the reading of the piece in "the closet," — a dreary process, — save in the case of Congreve's comedies. This was proved during a recent revival of "The Clandestine Marriage," which was listened to with curiosity rather than interest; and all might wonder how Mrs. Clive could have "made anything" of so poor a part as Mrs. Heidleberg. He goes on: "A more extensive walk in comedy than hers cannot be imagined; the chambermaid in every varied shape which art or nature could lend her; characters of caprice and affectation, from the high-bred Lady Fanciful, to the vulgar

Mrs. Heidleberg; country girls, romps, hoydens and dowdies, superannuated beauties, viragos, and humourists. To a strong and melodious voice, with an ear for music, she added all the sprightly action requisite." Strong mimicry was also one of her gifts. "She had an inimitable talent in ridiculing the extravagant actions, impertinent consequence, and insignificant parade of the female opera singers. Her mirth was so genuine, that whether it was restrained to the arch sneer, and the suppressed half laugh, — widened to the broad grin, or extended to the downright honest burst of loud laughter, — her audience was sure to accompany her."

These graphic touches bring her vividly before us. Fielding was no less judicious in his praise. "Mrs. Clive is esteemed by all an excellent comic actress; and as she has a prodigious fund of natural spirit and humour off the stage, she makes the most of the poet's on it. Nothing, though ever so barren, even though it exceeds the limits of nature, can be flat in her hands. She heightens all characters of humour she attempts; nor is she confined only to the hoyden miss or pert chambermaid, but in spiritous gay characters of high life, she always appears with such air, mien, and action, as speak the gay, lively, and desirable. She has been, by persons who remember both, compared to Mrs. Mountford; and by their natural talents for the stage, I am apt to believe the

comparison not unjust. I must however observe, Mrs. Mountford appeared with great success, *en Cavalier*, and made an adroit pretty fellow; Mrs. Clive does not appear in these characters, the concealing petticoat better suiting with her turn of make than the breeches. It is not from want of spirit or judgment to hit off the fop or the coxcomb, as she has evidently proved in the ballad she sings, called 'The Life of a Beau,' in which her action and gesture is as pleasing as in any part she performs. I could wish she would never attempt serious characters in comedy, and resign the part of Ophelia in 'Hamlet,' in which she is very unequal to herself. Yet all will allow that, 'take her all in all,' she has such talents as make her an excellent actress."

"If ever there were a true comic genius," breaks out the enthusiastic Victor, "Mrs. Clive is one! She, perhaps, never was equalled in her walk (as the stage term is); we are convinced, never excelled! She was always inimitable whenever she appeared in strong marked characters of middle or low life — her Nell in 'The Devil to Pay' was nature itself! and the spirit, roguery, and speaking looks of her chambermaids, accompanied with the most expressive voice that ever satisfied the ears of an audience, has made her loss irreparable!

"As strong humour is the great characteristic mark of an English comedy, so was it of this

laughter-loving, joy-exciting actress! Her extraordinary talents could even raise a dramatic trifle, provided there was nature in it, to a character of importance, — witness the Fine Lady in 'Lethe,' and the yet smaller part of Lady Fuz, in 'The Peep Behind the Curtain;' such sketches in her hands became high finished pictures! But, that I may not be thought too partial to this favourite comedian, I will venture to assert, she could not reach the higher characters in comedy, though she was ever excellent in the affectation of them. When the high-life polish of elegance was to appear in all the conscious superiority of a Lady Townly, I cannot say that Mrs. Clive would have done justice to herself, or the character. To show the great power of the actress in question, I shall give an instance of it, where she forced the whole town to follow, and applaud her in a character, which she certainly did not perform as the author intended it; but which could not be resisted, and gave high entertainment to those critics, who frankly acknowledged they were misled by the talents of the actress. The part I mean is Portia in 'The Merchant of Venice.' In the first place, blank verse, as it wants the truth and elegance of nature, was not uttered by Mrs. Clive with that delightful spirit which she always gave to prose; the lawyer's scene of Portia (as it is called), in the fourth act, was certainly meant by Shakespeare to be solemn,

pathetic, and affecting, — the circumstances must make it so, — and therefore the comic finishing which Mrs. Clive gave to the different parts of the pleadings (though greatly comic) was not in character.

"If therefore this theatrical genius was able to entertain, contrary to the intention of the author, — what must we say of her, or what words can describe her merits, when she appeared in the fulness of her powers, and was the very person she represented?"

From this we see what a special force and attraction was in the old acting, viz., that of imparting "breadth" to the performance. This idea of "breadth" is now almost lost, and there is hardly a single performer who has the secret, or to whom it is intelligible. Yet it is the most delightful and effective of all histrionic gifts. It needs no exertion, and comes of a large, thorough view, taken of the character, in contrast to the laborious or "niggling" (as it may be called) treatment now in fashion. An actor of "breadth" will convulse a house without moving a muscle, and will make a single, colourless sentence as significant as a whole dialogue. His eye, voice, manner, walk, all combine. Such a power had the late inimitable Buckstone during his reign. Then the public looked to him to furnish them with recreation, and with the recollection of it. As the hour of half-price drew on, the old Hay-

market filled; and about half-past ten the farce which was to charge the air with Buckstonian humours commenced. As the familiar twang of his voice was heard behind the scenes, a chuckle of delight passed over the house; and when he entered, brimming over with grotesque fun, a roar greeted him. "His voice," says a contemporary, "is in perfect keeping with his person: it suggests distillation; it seems to lazily flow from a mind charged with fat thoughts and unctuous conceits. He has the true low-comedy air in his walk and gesture; his face looks dry and red with long roasting before the footlights. He is the son of Mirth and Vulgarity. His mind is a machine which manufactures afresh the stuff it is fed on; what is wholesome and plain is reproduced in a new form, with a different colouring and an original aroma. The downright speaking of the old dramatists can never offend or shock when spoken by refined lips; but to such downright speaking Mr. Buckstone takes care to impart a meaning of his own, and makes plain speech a sort of intellectual perspective."

Such plenteous vivacity and absorption of the whole stage seems to have been one of our actress's most potent charms. In all the commendations of the gifts of this buoyant woman, who may be truly said to have "increased the gaiety" of the nation, we find that she was particularly extolled for one line of character, and that it was in the

"Chambermaid" she excelled. This is a generic class, the original type of which is now completely lost. In our own society the waiting-maid has little to distinguish her from other servants, and little interest is taken in her; but in the old days of intrigue, the chambermaid, or, rather, the confidential "ladies' maid," was a marked personage, who from her position had to be gifted with cleverness, versatility, skill, readiness of tongue, and a goodly portion of deceit. She was in the service it might be of a young heiress, followed by many suitors, and watched over by angry and zealous guardians; or of some dazzling beauty pursued by careless rakes. Here were also rivals contending with each other, so that the "chambermaid" was the intermediary, and in fact mistress of the situation. No well-conceived comedy was complete without its saucy, amusing "chambermaid," though the character had become well worn out by the time of Sheridan, who in "The Rivals" presents a very "mild" and inefficient specimen. This suggests how curiously marked types have become lost, owing to the general smoothing away of all social peculiarities, and such grotesque but amusing figures as we find in the comedies of Reynolds and Morton would now be received with incredulity, for the reason that the originals are unfamiliar to us. The amusement furnished by the stage has certainly been impaired in consequence.

In this histrionic home she was destimed to remain for twenty-two years without a break. Other performers grew touchy and techy, deserted on some affront or grievance, often to return again. She never "budged," — once she had enlisted, she stayed honourably by her colours, her talents ripening with practice, and growing more popular every year. For the public is rarely inconstant, and relishes and respects constancy in its favourite. At the same time — like many a servant long in place — she was often troublesome to her masters and to her fellows; and her sharp tongue, on the slightest grievance or fancied oppression, was to make itself felt. Many a *mauvais quart d'heure* was she to cause the indulgent Garrick. As Tate Wilkinson said, "she knew every sore place in that sensitive being, and could make his withers wince whenever she pleased." To her companions, when they incurred her displeasure or dislike, she could make herself no less disagreeable.

Among the ladies thus enrolled was the tragedy queen, Woffington, the well-known "Peg," of whom the stage historians are fond of drawing such flattering pictures. She was in truth an interesting, good-natured, gifted creature, full of a hearty Irish good nature, impulsive and sometimes generous. Her wayward extravagant course was redeemed by her singular and scrupulous devotion to her duty, attested by prompters and man-

agers — the best witnesses. She often played six nights in one week, and "never was known to have chose occasional illnesses, which I have seen assumed by capital performers, to the great vexation and loss of the manager." Thus Mr. Hitchcock of the Dublin Theatre. "She never," says another, "disappointed one audience in three winters, either by real or assumed illness; yet I have often seen her on the stage when she ought to have been in bed." "To her honour," adds a third, "be it ever remembered that, while thus in the zenith of her glory, courted and caressed by all ranks and degrees, she made no alteration in her behaviour; she remained the same gay, affable, obliging, good-natured Woffington to every one around her. Not to the lowest performer in the theatre did she refuse playing for, — out of twenty-six benefits she acted in twenty-four." At the same time she could be coarse and violent, and her squabbles and contests with other great ladies of the greenroom were as amusing as they were notorious.

Between her and Mrs. Clive there was a general temper of hostility which gradually developed. Woffington had soon found her situation with the manager uncomfortable, and when he married — it was said that he had given her a promise of marriage — she could not face her rather mortifying position, and joined the rival theatre. In the greenroom Woffington reigned supreme. There

she gave way to her obstreperous spirits and boisterous humour. When the Duchess of Queensberry was one night introduced to the greenroom, the first sight that presented itself was Mrs. Woffington, with a pot of porter in her hand, crying out, "Confusion to all order!" "The lowest *canaille* of a theatre surrounded a table covered with mutton pies, and seemed by their manner and appearance to realise the sentiment just toasted by the beautiful heroine." The visitor was horrified, and rushed away, asking, "Is hell broke loose?" This grotesque picture brings the actress vividly before us. Yet with this reckless humour there was in her a strain of sentiment and seriousness, — a combination often found on the stage. Anticipating a little by a few years, we find ourselves present at another exhibition in the greenroom, when an unseemly quarrel occurred between Mrs. Clive and Mrs. Woffington, which amused and astonished "the town."

In the year 1754, when "Henry IV." was acted, a very beautiful and accomplished actress (Woffington) condescended, in order to give strength to the play, to act the trifling character of Lady Percy. The house was far from crowded, and a celebrated comic actress (Mrs. Clive) triumphed in the barrenness of the pit and boxes: she threw out some expressions against the consequence of Lady Percy. This produced a very cool and cutting answer from the other,

Peg Woffington and Kitty Clive in the "Greenroom Scuffle"

Coloured caricature by Gilray

who reminded the former of her playing to a much thinner audience one of her favourite parts, and now the ladies, not being able to restrain themselves within the bounds of cool conversation, a most terrible fray ensued. I do not believe they went so far as pulling of caps, but their altercation would not have disgraced the females of Billingsgate. While the two great actresses were thus entertaining each other in one part of the green-room, the admirer of Lady Percy, an old gentleman who afterward bequeathed her a considerable fortune, and the brother of this comic lady (Raftor) were more seriously employed. Mr. Swiney struck the other with his cane; thus provoked, he very calmly laid hold of the old man's jaw. "Let go my jaw, you villain," and "Throw down your cane, sir!" were repeatedly echoed by the combatants. Barry, who was afraid lest the audience should hear full as much of the quarrel as of the play, rushed into the room and put an end to the battle. It is characteristic that the whole quartette were Irish. There was published a caricature of the incident, entitled "The Greenroom Scuffle." It is Davies, who, not without humour, reports the incident. Swiney, Swinney, or Mac-Swiney, was an old dangler about the theatres, and had been a manager himself, though ever pursued by ill luck.

The same chronicler, who is always agreeable, tells us that, even before their engagement at the

same theatre, the two ladies "had clashed on various occasions, which brought forth squabbles diverting enough to their several partisans among the actors. Woffington was well bred, seemingly very calm, and at all times mistress of herself. Clive was frank, open, and impetuous; what came uppermost in her mind she spoke without reserve. The other blunted the sharp speeches of Clive by her apparently civil but keen and sarcastic replies; thus she often threw Clive off her guard by an arch severity which the warmth of the other could not easily parry."

Mrs. Clive was present on the disastrous night of the Chinese Festival Riot, when Drury Lane Theatre was all but wrecked. The bill is interesting:

Theatre Royal in Drury Lane, this present Wednesday, being the 12th of November, will be presented a Comedy, call'd

THE INCONSTANT!

Capt. Duretete, Mr. Woodward; Young Mirabel, Mr. Palmer; Old Mirabel, Mr. Yates; Dugard, Mr. Blakes; Petit, Mr. Usher; Oriana, Mrs. Davies; Lamorce, Mrs. Bennet; Bizarre, Mrs. Clive.

To which will be added a New Grand Entertainment of Dancing, call'd

THE CHINESE FESTIVAL!

Compos'd by Mr. Noverre.

The Characters by Mons. Delaistre, Sig. Baletti, Mr. Lauchery, Mr. Noverre (jun.), Mr. Dennison, Mons. St.

Leger, Mr. Shawford, Mr. Mathews, Mons. Pochee, Mons. L'Clert, Mr. Harrison, Mr. Granier, Mr. Hust, Mons. Sarney, Mr. Walker, Mrs. Vernon, Miss Noverre, Mr. Morris, Mr. Rooker, Mr. Sturt, Mr. Atkins, Mr. Ackman, Mr. Walker, Sig. Pietro, Mrs. Addison, Mrs. Noverre, Mrs. Gibbons, Mad. Charon, Mad. Rousselet, Mrs. Preston, Mad. Rouend, Mrs. Philips, Mrs. Lawson, The Little Pietro, Miss Young, Master Simson, Master Pope, Master Blagden, Master Hust, Master Spilsbury, Miss Bride, Miss Poplin, Miss Simson, Miss Heath, Mr. Scrase, Mr. Lewis, Mr. Jefferson, Mr. Burton, Mr. Marr, Mr. Vaughan, Mr. Chamness, Mr. Bullbrick, Mr. Clough, Mr. Allen, Mr. Gray, Mrs. Bradshaw, Mrs. Hippisley, Mrs. Mathews, Mrs. Simson, and Miss Mills. — With New Music, Scenes, Machines, Habits, and other Decorations.

Boxes, 5*s.*; Pit, 3*s.*; First Gallery, 2*s.*; Upper Gallery, 1*s.*

Places for the Boxes to be had of Mr. Varney, at the Stage-door of the Theatre.

*** No persons can possibly be admitted behind the Scenes, or into the Orchestra. Nothing under the Full Prices will be taken during the whole performance.

Between her and one of the leading male performers there also reigned a sort of hostility. This was that excellent actor, Woodward. His delightfully expressive portrait looks down on us from the wall of the Garrick Club. The fine face breathes the whole spirit of the character, The Copper Captain; it is full of life and expression; the reckless Bobadil-like carelessness and vigour, the flourish with which the hat is set on, the air of flash and the strut, are all admirable. But

what strikes us most is the sense of power, resource, fire, and entertainment in his bold eye, and *bravura* of expression. Such a picture is the best memorial, and indeed revives the play and character for the spectator. There are but a few of such histrionic presentments, among which might be counted the fine full-length portrait of Lewis as The Marquis, a picture breathing the whole spirit of gallant comedy; the better known one of Garrick as Abel Drugger, matchless for its expression of low wonder and cunning; and above all the scene from "The Clandestine Marriage," also in the Garrick Club, with its wonderfully painted figure of Lord Ogleby. There might perhaps be added that of Kemble as Hamlet, by Sir Thomas Lawrence. The successful painter in this line is nearly always a playgoer, not contenting himself with conventional sittings, but fixing and carrying away his impressions from the stage itself. Such were Zoffany, De Wilde, Sir Martin Shee, and Clint.

Between Woodward and the actress there was a sort of jealousy or lack of sympathy, which extended even to the business of the scene. Neither seemed willing to coöperate with the other, or the touchy actress fancied that he was always struggling for "his own hand." The audience were quite in the secret of this hostility, and were often highly entertained by scenes between the pair. Once, in January, 1756, during the performance

of the "Taming of the Shrew," then called "Catherine and Petruchio," a strange scene took place. As Woodward made his exit, he actually threw down Mrs. Clive with such violence, Wilkinson tells us, "as to convince the audience that Petruchio was not so lordly as he assumed to be." The actress was so enraged at this rough treatment that "her talons, tongue, and passions were very expressive to the eyes of all beholders, and it was with the utmost difficulty that she suppressed her indignation." Wilkinson seems to have witnessed the scene. Davies, on another occasion, noted that she seemed quite intimidated by his violence, as if by a tyrannical husband in real life. Once he stuck a fork into her finger. But the incidents are of so obstreperous a kind that this must have been an accident. With such performers, the whole must have been a most entertaining spectacle. We could wish to see it revived by Irving and Miss Terry, not in this maimed, farcical shape, but in the poetical form of the original, where Sly's vision offers one of the most dramatic contrasts conceivable.

Another passage occurred between the pair in the following year (1755) during the performance of "The Double Dealer," and which, Davies tells us, "caused such repeated laughter in the theatre as I scarcely ever heard," — no great test of anything very humourous, as the moving of audiences to laughter is often regulated by Swift's receipt,

viz.: the pulling away a chair when a person is about to sit down. Mrs. Clive, who performed Lady Froth, had by mistake, or in a hurry, laid on more rouge than usual; and Brush, the valet, played by Woodward, instead of saying "Your coachman, having a red face," said "Your ladyship has a red face." This was no sooner uttered, than peals of laughter were redoubled all over the theatre. Woodward affected to look abashed and confounded; Clive bore the incident heroically. When they were in the greenroom, the players expected a scene of altercation; but the inimitable actress disappointed them. "Come, Mr. Woodward," she gravely said, "let us rehearse the next scene, lest more blunders should fall out." In this Lady Froth, "Tom Davies," who was enthusiastic on her merits, protests she was superior to all actresses. "Happy the author who could write a part equal to her abilities! She not only in general exceeded the writer's expectation, but all that the most enlightened could conceive."

In 1761, the town was entertained by a quarrel between Shuter, the "low" comedian, and the fiery actress, who thought she had been injured by him. She was always touchy about anything that related to her "benefit." On this occasion she had chosen a translated French piece, — "The Island of Slaves," — and some one, writing from the St. George's Coffee-House, had addressed a malignant letter to the papers on this score. "He

exhorts the public," she writes, "not to go to my benefit, because I was to have a French farce, wrote by a poor, wretched author. There is a malicious and wicked insinuation in his letter; and then with great malice and art, he jumbles together some popular words — such as French farce, English liberty, etc." This production, she chose to assume was the work of Shuter, and she attacked him with much fury. "I hope I may be indulged, though a woman, to say I have always despised the French politics, but I never yet heard we were at war with their wit: it should not be imputed to her, as a crime, to have a translation produced, when one part in three of all the comedies now acting are taken from the French, besides those of modern authors that have sneaked into the theatres without confessing from where they came." Unluckily she went on to ridicule Mr. Shuter's mode of composition. "It does not seem, by the style of his letter, that he is very intimately acquainted with his own language, but it is evident he knows nothing of French." It was Mrs. Clive's fate always to furnish entertainment to the town, and to her reader also. Shuter had a retort ready which caused much amusement. His benefit he said had been most successful, "as usual, thanks to the indulgence of the public; Mrs. Clive's I suppose short of her expectations." Then, with malice, he printed her letter, as a reply to her attack:

"SIR: — I Much Desire you would Do Me the Favour to let me know if you was the author of a letter in *The Dayle Gazeteer* relating to his New Piece I had for my benefet; as it was intended to hurt my Benefet, and serve yours everybody will naturely conclude you was the author if you are not ashamed of being so I suppose you will own it: if you really was not concerned in wrightin it I shall be very glad: for I should be extreamly shock'd that an actor should be guilty of so base an action; I dont often take the liberty of wrighting to the Publick but am Now under a Nessity of Doing it — therefore Desier your answer.

"*Henrietta street.*"

Shuter, to clear himself, actually swore an affadavit before a magistrate that he was innocent.

But it was with her good-natured manager that this sort of fracas most frequently occurred. The course of these many wrangles offers a spectacle of high comedy, and suggests the pleasant animosities of Benedick and Beatrix. This hostility was maintained all through their twenty years' relation. The superficial might suppose that a deeply envenomed hatred was raging, and the actress delighted in nothing so much as "plaguing" her manager on every occasion. But it will be seen that in all this bickering there was a real regard founded on a genuine esteem, as indeed was to be expected between two such sterling characters.

As, indeed, it came out later, this was but the "*amantium iræ!*" She was all the time chafing under what she thought was lack of recognition of her powers, and had real admiration for her manager's talent. She also resented his eagerness to put himself forward and secure all the praise. "It was the wish of her life," says the worthy Davies, "to act characters of importance with him whenever she could thrust herself into a play with him." How happily this expresses her character, — "she exerted her utmost skill to excel him — she was true game to the last." On the other hand, in a droll contradictory spirit, when she saw he was only striving for his own word, she did her best to frustrate his efforts — fixing her eyes on the audience and allowing them to wander to her friends in the boxes, at his most critical passages, — this she knew would fret him and put him out. On other occasions, when she was in better humour, she entertained herself with comic "asides" to her companion, who, though rigid on all matters connected with stage discipline, could not control his muscles and had after to retire, being driven off the stage. All this was of course improper, and a foolish frowardness, but, as has been said, the secret was revealed later.

CHAPTER V.

"Lady Riot" — Specimens of Bow China — Dispute with Garrick — Foote as Othello, and Clive as Portia — "Bayes in Petticoats" — The "Rosciad" — Lady Bab — The Clandestine Marriage.

NE of Clive's important characters, and always associated with her name, in which she took her farewell of the stage, was Lady Riot, the "fine lady" in "Lethe." This was an old farce of his own which he refitted entirely, introducing new characters, — an old nobleman, Lord Chalkstone, afflicted with gout,[1] a "fine gentleman" for Woodward, and this "fine lady" for Clive. Evidence of the popularity of these two characters — Garrick was a failure — is found in the exquisite little figures of Bow china which were issued at the time, and have now become the rarest specimen of that manufacture. They are modelled with a charming grace and

[1] Human infirmities should never be brought on the stage; indeed Elia has laid down that even the grosser faiïings of character, such as misers, etc., are to be excluded. When Dickens's "Christmas Carol" was in rehearsal, a realistic stage-manager was for ordering a set of "irons" for Tiny Tim, but the amiable author took him aside. "No," he said, "there may be parents in the audience to whom it would be painful."

spirit. "Kitty" is shown in a monstrous petticoat, laces, and furbelows; while Woodward struts gaily, his enormous hat "cocked" — the very quintessence of a town beau. The pair of figures display much dramatic action, and are full of interest; and good specimens sell for nearly £30 apiece.

The bringing out of this piece was attended by an unpleasant dispute with the manager. He had good-naturedly chosen it for her benefit, but the first deep offence was the mode of announcement in the bills. For here was to be seen only, —

> "The New Character of *Lord Chalkstone*, by MR. GARRICK!"

Her part was of course named, but not in the proper "displayed" style. "Madame Clive at noon came to the theatre," says Tate Wilkinson, "and furiously rang the alarm bell; for her name being omitted was an offence so serious that nothing but 'blood!' was the word. Could she have got near him, and he had been severe in his replies, I daresay she would have disarranged his wig and dress. Mrs. Clive was a mixture of combustibles: she was passionate, cross, vulgar, yet sensible; a very generous woman, and, as a comic actress, of genuine worth, — indeed, *indeed, indeed*, she was a diamond of the first water!" The sequel is admirably characteristic. She had great successes, a capital "reception," and her mimicry of the Italian singers was encored. In a moment

all her humour vanished. "She came off the stage much sweetened in temper and manners from going on." "Ay!" she said, in triumph, "that artful devil would not hurt me with the town, though he had struck my name out of his bill." She laughed and joked about her late ill humour as if she could have kissed all around her. Though that happiness was not granted, but willingly excused, and what added to her applause was her inward joy, triumph, and satisfaction, in finding the little great man was afraid to meet her, which was of all consolations the greatest. This happily sketched scene, showing a good knowledge of character, is rarely an epitome of the relations of this actress and her manager.

The bill speaks for itself, and shows that she had her proper place:

Not acted these Ten Years.

FOR THE BENEFIT OF MRS. CLIVE.

At the Theatre Royal in Drury Lane, on Saturday next, being the 27th of March, 1756, will be revived a Comedy called

THE LADY'S LAST STAKE;

OR, THE WIFE'S RESENTMENT.

(Written by Colley Cibber, Esq.)

Lord George Brilliant, Mr. Woodward; Lord Wronglove, Mr. Palmer; Sir Friendly Moral, Mr. Berry; Lady Gentle, Mrs. Pritchard; Mrs. Conquest, Mrs. Davies; Miss Notable, Miss Macklin; Hartshorn, Miss Minors; and Lady Wronglove, by

Mrs. CLIVE.

(Being the First Time of their Appearance in those Characters.)

To which will be added, a Dramatic Satire, called

LETHE!

In which will be introduced a New Modern Character, to be performed by Mr. GARRICK.

The Fine Lady ... ... Mrs. CLIVE.

In which will be introduced a New Mimic Italian Song.

Part of the Pit will be laid into the Boxes.

Another of her amusing creations, which gave scope for her unbounded humour, was in Foote's "Author," one of those unwarrantable personalities sketched from living persons, in which he revelled. In 1756 he was engaged in Drury Lane, and played often with Clive. One of these performances was his extraordinary attempt at Othello, with Clive in Portia, — a combination of two mimics, which must have verged on burlesque. Cadwallader was drawn from a Mr. Apreece, or Aprice, who had a trick of sucking his wrist as he spoke. Mrs. Clive was the wife, Becky. What the inimitable lady would have made of her character, aided by the humours of her acting, will be seen from his description of his spouse:

"O Lord, Mr. Caper, this is Becky, my dear Becky! Child, this is a great poet, — ah, but she does not know what that is, — a little foolish or so, but of a very good family. Here, Becky, child, won't you ask Mr. Caper to

come and see you? Isn't she a fine girl? Do come and look at her a little, do. He says you are as fine a woman as ever he ———. Then go talk any nonsense to her — no matter what — she's a great fool and won't know the difference."

The ridiculed gentleman, however, obtained an injunction from the lord chamberlain forbidding the piece, to the confusion and annoyance of the whole greenroom. Foote, the frustrated mimic, was overwhelmed with despair and misery because he was not allowed to make others miserable, while Clive with piercing eyes and voice inveighed against her disappointment. A more serious lack of taste and decorum was shown in her attempt at Portia in the "Merchant of Venice," — a character which she "discharged" not as originally *au serieux*, but in quite a burlesque spirit. In the trial scene she presented a comic Portia, and lighted the character by mimicking in it the manner of some leading counsel, such as Counsellor Dunning, whose peculiarities she "took off." The conjoined efforts of the pair must have made the play a rather ludicrous spectacle.

Unluckily, she was too much addicted to such attempts, — another of which was her essaying Bayes in "The Rehearsal," which was a complete failure as a "breeches part." Like most born comedians, she had a hankering after serious or even tragic characters. These she fancied she could discharge with ability and success. It was

thus that for one of her benefits "the comic Clive put on the royal robes of Zara; she found them too heavy, and very wisely never attempted it again." [1]

It is to be suspected that the actress had always a fancy for writing, from the letters and addresses she was fond of addressing to the public, and it must be said that her style and matter is often excellent, as in her letter to Garrick on his retirement, which for feeling and description is of the first class. In 1753 she ventured to write and perform a little two-act piece, which has at least smartness and spirit; it was called —

THE REHEARSAL: OR, BAYS IN PETTICOATS;
A Comedy in Two Acts, as it is performed at the Theatre Royal in Drury Lane. Written by Mrs. Clive; the Music composed by Dr. Boyce. 1753. Price One Shilling. Published by the Dodsleys.

It was ushered by a simple, straightforward address, in which the author, as usual, shows her honest pride in the favour she enjoyed:

[1] It would be tedious to give a list of her characters, which will be found in the laborious collections of the Rev. Mr. Genest. They amount almost to two hundred! How invaluable such variety of characters must have been, may be well conceived. We may contrast with it the present unhappy system, whereby the young actor is sent out into the country charged with a single character, which he plays from town to town often for several years together.

"This little Piece is as written above three Years since, and acted for my Benefit. The last Scene was an Addition the year after: whatever Faults are in it, I hope will be pardoned, when I inform the Public I had first no Designe of printing it: and do it now at the Request of my Friends, who (as it met with so much indulgence from the audience) thought it might give some pleasure in the reading. The songs were written by a gentleman. I take this Opportunity to assure the Public, I am, with great Gratitude and Respect,

"Their most Oblig'd, Humble Servant,

"C. CLIVE."

The performers were Woodward, Shuter, Cross, the prompter, — who appeared in his own character, — Beard, and Miss Hoppisley. It seems to have been played about the year 1750. Mrs. Hazard, played by Clive, is bringing out a farce, and consults some fashionable visitors; as she is about to rehearse it, some importunate visitors come in and disturb the proceedings. But the trifle depends entirely on the smart dialogue, chiefly referring to her own personal relations with the audience, with hits at particular follies:

"But don't your heart ache," asks Willing, "when you think of the first night, hey?"

"Not in the least," she replies, "the town never hiss anything that is introduced to them by a person of conse-

quence and breeding, because they are sure they'll have nothing low."

"Aye," he replies, "but they mayn't be so sure they'll have nothing foolish."

"Ha! why perhaps they mayn't find out one so soon as t'other, ha, ha, ha! well, let me die if that is not a very good thing! But it is well that the town don't hear me, not that I mean quite what I say, neither, for to do them justice, they're generally in the right in their censure."

They talk of the music, and she gives a hit at the manager:

"O, if dear Garrick could but sing, what a Don Quixote he'd make."

"Don't you think Barry would be a better? he's so tall, you know, and so finely made for it. I could take it to Covent Garden."

"Lord, I wouldn't think of it, it stands in such a bad air."

"Aye, the actors can't play there more than three times a week. They have more need of a physician than a poet at that house."

She then explains she has given one of the characters to Mrs. Clive:

"I wish she don't spoil it, for she's so conceited and insolent that she won't let me teach it to her. You must know then, when I told her I had a part for her in a performance of mine, in the prettiest manner I was able (for one must be civil to these sort of people, when one wants them), says she, 'Indeed, madam, I must see the whole piece, for I shall take no part in a new thing without choosing that which I think I can act best. I have been a great sufferer already by the manager's not doing justice

to my genius; but I hope I shall next year convince the town what fine judgment they have; for I intend to play a capital tragedy part for my own benefit.'"

A girl "Miss" comes in, asking to be engaged to sing, and gives a specimen. Mrs. Clive takes up her favourite subject of ridicule:

"O fie, Miss! That will never do: you speak your words as plain as a parish girl: the audience will never endure you in this kind of singing; if you understand what they say. You must give your words the Italian accent, child."

She then mimics the singers. The scene now changes to the theatre, for the "Rehearsal," when Cross says:

"The music has been here this half hour, and everybody but Mrs. Clive, and I dare say she'll not be long, for she's very punctual."

"Well, Cross," she replies, "you have had a great deal of trouble with this thing: pray when is your benefit — you have a benefit, I suppose? set me down all your side boxes and every first row in the front."

Cross then announces that:

"Madam, Mrs. Clive has sent word that she can't possibly wait on you this morning, as she is oblig'd to go to some ladies about her benefit; but you may depend upon her being very perfect."

"Mr. Cross, what did you say? Mrs. Clive sent me word she can't come, and is gone to some ladies about her benefit! Sir, she shall have no benefit. Very fine indeed. To have the assurance to prefer her benefit to my 'Re-

hearsal.' Mr. Cross, you need not give yourself the trouble to set down any place for me at your benefit, for I'll never come into the playhouse any more."

A rehearsal of the music follows, when Miss Giggle breaks in with a number of friends. They interrupt in the most annoying way, and finally the whole performance is given up. Thus the trifle ends.

It was in 1761 that Churchill threw the whole theatrical community into a state of alarm and indignation by his publication of the famous "Rosciad," in which the merits and defects of each player were sketched with a terrible vigour and truth. The small performers suffered the most, such as Tom Davies, who was told that he delivered his lines much as "a cur mouths a bone." Some obscure people were extravagantly praised; some favourites as outrageously abused. The performers were in terror, as the burly ex-parson was seen "near the spikes of the orchestra" making his observations. Mrs. Clive and her friend, Miss Pope, were let off with judicious praises. Not long before she retired, a contemptible imitator of Churchill published a similar gallery, entitled "Thespis," in which was a scurrilous attack upon our actress. After a malignant allusion to —

> "Clive's weak head and execrable heart,"

he goes on to describe her:

"Formed for those coarse and vulgar scenes of life,
Where low bred rudeness always breathes in strife;
When in some blessed union we find
The deadliest temper with the narrowest mind,
The boldest front that never knew a fear,
The flintiest eye that never shed a tear,—
Then not an actress certainly alive
Can e'en dispute preëminence with Clive!"

There can be no question but the authors of the "Rosciad" and of "Thespis," would in our time have been brought to the law courts, and have had to answer in damages for such libellous attacks.

One of her happiest creations was that of Lady Bab in that diverting piece, "High Life Below Stairs," which may be still said to hold the stage. This is true comedy, which it is impossible to witness without genuine enjoyment. It is founded on the folly and affectation not merely of one class, but on the general weakness of all, viz.: the aping the manners and ways of our betters. My Lord Duke, Sir Harry — how pleasant too the familiarity of Bob, the Bishop, an unseen member of the fraternity! — are all delightful. But the art of personating these characters is lost. The whole depends on the perfect genuineness of the assumption, with a sort of state and pretension. Ordinarily we are presented with servants of the existing type; there is no attempt to portray the stately, conceited, pampered menial, who wears his master's vices at second hand.

This merry piece has been generally ascribed to a master of Merchant Taylors School, the Rev. Mr. Townly, but it has also been considered Garrick's. The London footmen were an important body, and were often sent by their employers to keep places for them at the theatres, and Garrick would naturally shrink from having his name attached to such a piece of ridicule. It may be conceived that Mrs. Clive was at her best in this presentment of the "fine lady's maid." That this was a dangerous piece to bring forward was shown by its reception at Edinburgh, where all the menials of the town assembled in the gallery and brought about a regular riot.

Yet another of her brilliant characters was that of Mrs. Heidleberg, the vulgar old maid, in "The Clandestine Marriage," a delightful comedy, but requiring to be performed by well-graced and well-trained comedians, — nay, the very atmosphere of the theatre should be one of calm high-class comedy, such as is found in the Théâtre Français, even before the curtain has risen. There should also be the practice of years, when the details of the piece are enriched by successive performances, and the players grow with their characters. The composition of "The Clandestine Marriage" might be a study for our dramatists, for it was literally written in the theatre. The characters, as the piece was constructed, actually bore only the names of the actors; the manager contributed as

much as the author. How excellent the whole is may be seen from the fact that the French valet is one of the most important characters. No servant should be introduced merely for the mechanical functions of service, but for his share in the plot, or for the development of other characters. In our own time it is the fashion to open the play by the unmeaning device of a conversation between two servants, who converse in a supposed dialect of the servants' hall.

The bill of the performance is interesting as showing the businesslike character of the playbills:

THE FIFTEENTH NIGHT.

By His Majesty's Company, at the Theatre Royal in Drury Lane, This present Thursday, the 10th April, will be presented a New Comedy, call'd

THE CLANDESTINE MARRIAGE!

THE PRINCIPAL CHARACTERS BY

Mr. Holland, Mr. Powell, Mr. Yates, Mr. King, Mr. Palmer, Mr. Love, Mr. Lee, Mr. Baddeley, Mr. Aickin, Mr. Watkins, Miss Pope, Mrs. Palmer, Mrs. Abington, Miss Plym, and Mrs. CLIVE.

Boxes, 5*s*. Pit, 3*s*. First Gallery, 2*s*. Upper Gallery, 1*s*.

Places for the Boxes to be had of Mr. Johnston, at the Stage Door.

*** No Money to be received at the Stage Door nor any Money returned after the Curtain is drawn up.

Vivant Rex et Regina.

To-morrow, "KING JOHN," With the "CAPRICIOUS LOVERS."

For the Benefit of Mr. HAVARD.

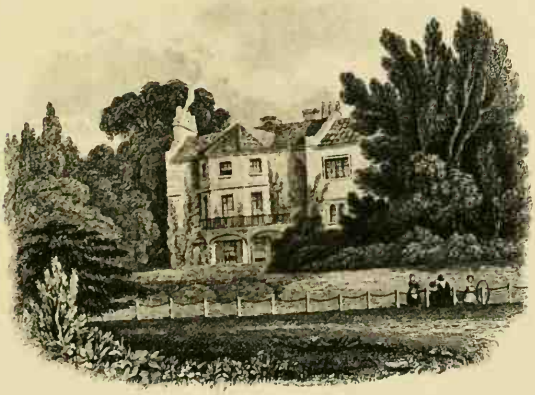
Little Strawberry Hill

Residence of Kitty Clive (Twickenham)
Engraved by C. J. Smith

Twickenham March 22 1778

I must mention the noblest action of your life,
your Generosity to Nephew David; all the
world is repeating your praises; those people
who allways envyd you, and wish'd to
detract from you allway declaring you
love'd money too much ever to part from
it now they will feel foolish and look
Contemptable; all that I can say is I wish
that heaven had made me such an uncle.

To David Garrick Esqr C. Clive



CHAPTER VI.

Continued Wranglings with Garrick — Correspondence — Ill Spelling — "Quaviling" — Fined for Absence — "Acting a Gridiron" — Doctor Johnson — Retirement from the Stage.

UNLUCKILY with advancing years the temper of our actress seemed to grow soured, and her sense of grievance, real or imaginary, more keen. She seemed to look out for opportunities of quarrel, and made herself as troublesome as she could. This unlucky spirit seems presently to have actually driven her to the resolution of retiring from the stage, when she was scarcely fifty-seven years old. A single specimen of the style in which she would comport herself in a wrangle of this sort will be found highly entertaining, as exhibiting her frowardness and the placidity and tact of Mr. Garrick; indeed, it proves what admirable gifts of "management," in the strictest sense, he possessed. The quarrel arose on the subject of the day of a benefit, on which the players were always touchy. The letters speak for themselves, and I have retained the bad spelling for which "Kitty" was famous, as an additional contribution to the reader's amusement.[1]

[1] Some of these curious letters will be found in the Forster

Mrs. Clive to the Managers.

"Feb. 13, 2 o'clock.

"GENTLEMEN: — I am advised (I may say it is insisted in by my best friends) not to be a dupe to your ill treatment of me, by giving up above half of my income at a time when I know I can have no alternetive. I know tis in vain to Expostulate with people in power: whether I am injured or not will appear to all who are imparsial: as to your sneering me about my consequence, you may take what steps you please with your power, but you can't mortifie me. Tis nessesary to explain one thing which may be convenient to be forgot by you, that when Mr. Lacy agreed with me in the summer he gave me his word that everything relating to my engagement this season shou'd stand as it did in my last article, where my Benefit is perticularised to be on or before the 17 of March; of the truth of this I will take my oath. As to Mr. Woodward insisting upon haveing my day, he may insist on haveing part of my Sallery — I have nothing to doe with him, and have behaved allways to the managers of the Play-house I belong'd to, in an honest and open manner, never haveing had scheems or Desings to undermine or disapoint them in there business. Therefore whatever mine may be, you shan't have it to say I took the advan-

MSS. at South Kensington; some were published by Mr. J. Fitzgerald Molloy, in a sketch of Mrs. Clive's career.

tage of Mrs. Pritchard's illness to distress your Plays. As to my Benefit you shall do as you please, as I have no written agreement.

"I am, gent., your Servt.,

"C. CLIVE."

Mr. Garrick's Answer.

"DEAR MADAM: — You always choose to have some quarrel at your benefit, and without reason; but I do not. I am surprised that you have not thanked the managers for this kindness, instead of writing so peevish a letter. Your benefit is now settled upon the best day of the week, and six days sooner than you were last year. This was meant kindly for you, and every lady must see it in that light. I shall be sorry that you will not accept of that day (as you are pleased to say), because I wish you well, and it will be of great service to you: therefore, if you will not advertise and fix your play, your folly be upon your own head. I cannot do more than I have done for you, and your friends must blame you.

"I am, dear madam,

"Your humble servant,

"*Friday night, 14 Feb., 1768.* D. G."

Mrs. Clive to the Managers.

"SIR: — I am much surprised to hear that you have fixed the 17 of March for my Benefit, and that Mrs. Dancer is to have the Monday before

(which, as Mr. Hopkins tells me, was designed for Mr. Barry). I hope I shall not be guilty of vanity in saying that upon Drury Lane Theatre, nither Mr. Barry nor Mrs. Dancer have a right to their Benefits before me. I have done you great service this season, and at every call, when they either cou'd not, or wou'd not play, have been the stop gap in playing principle parts — and even when I have been extremely ill; I do not suppose that expostulation will have any effect to alter what you and the Lady have been pleased to settle. Therefore all I mean by giving you this trouble, is to assure you I will not accept of that day, nor will I advertise for it. If I am wrong in this determination, I may loose my friends, and they will naturally think you have acted onorably. (?) Your humble Servt.,

"*Friday, Feb. 18, 1768.* C. CLIVE."

Mrs. Clive to Mr. Garrick.

"Feb. 19, 1768.

"SIR: — I am sorry to give you this trouble, but I really cannot comprehend what you mean by saying you exspected I should thanke the managers for their tenderness to me. I have allways been greatfull to every one who has obliged me, and if you will be so good as to point out the obligations I have to you and Mr. Lacy, I shall have great pleasure in acknowledging them. You tell

me you have done all you can for me, and you can do more. I don't know how to understand that. Any one who sees your letter wou'd suppose I was kept at your Theatre out of Charitey. If you still look over the number of times I have play'd this season — you must think I have desarvd the monney you give me. You say you give me the best day in the week. I am sorry to say I cannot be of your opinion. St. Patrick's Day is the very worst to me that can be. Mrs. Yates' might be the strongest Benefit, as her interest and mine clash in the Box's. As to my quaviling you are under a very great misstake. There is nothing I dread so much, I have not spirits for that, tho' have for acting. You say that you have fixt the day, and have drawn a line under it that I may be sure I can have no other: therefore I must take it — But I must think it (and so will every impartial person) very hard that Mrs. Dancer should have her Benefit before Mrs. Clive. You may depend upon having no further trouble with me. Indeed, I flattered myself that as the greatest part was past of the season, and I had done everything you asked of me, in playing a very insignificant part on purpose to please you, I say, I was in hope's it would have ended as it had gone so far, without any unkindness. But I shall say no more than that I am, Sir,

"Your most humble servt.,

"C. Clive."

Mr. Garrick to Mrs. Clive.

"Saturday.

"DEAR CLIVE: — How can you be so ridiculous, and still so cross, to mistake every word of my letter, that I could have so low a thought as you suggest about charity, and which I am ashamed to read in yours. The insignificant part which you said you acted to oblige me, is very insignificant indeed as well as the piece it is in, so you have endeavoured to be rude to me without effect — you speak of these things, just as you are in or out of humour; so it shall stand for nothing. However, I have such a regard for you, that I promise you for the future, you shall be no more troubled with any nonsense of mine, and I am rejoiced that you have cancelled the obligation you say you conferred upon me by accepting the part, by ungenteely telling me of it. You will find in your present humour objections to any day, but we really meant you kindly in giving you your own day, that you might avoid opera nights, and have nobody to come immediately before or after you. This I did not do out of charity, but out of that respect which I ever pay to genius, and it is not my fault if Mrs. Clive will not be as rational off the stage, as she is meritorious on it. I am, my dear madam,

"Your most sincere well wisher and servant,

"D. GARRICK.

"P. S. I drew a line under the day in speaking of it as I wrote in your own words, and not with any other intention. It is impossible to mistake it."

All which is truly entertaining, and "quaviling" is an original form; but the grievance rankled. It is droll to note how in her letters the sense of injury worked itself off, and when she had expended her vexation in some smart biting phrases, she was only too ready to lower her colours.

Her perverseness, no doubt, gave Mr. Garrick a vast deal of anxiety and annoyance, — so much so, that it was well known he came to dread an altercation with her as much as with an actor. Any yielding or complaisance, he had to obtain by humouring her, or by compensation, sooner than have the usual wrangle. As when she grew old, and was unsuited to the character of Miss Price in "Love and Love," — a girl of sixteen, — he could only "get it from" her by giving her the more important character of Mrs. Frail, to which, however, she was equally unsuited. Nor had she much sense of restraint or decorum in expressing her feelings. As when on the first night of the ranting piece, "Barbarossa," he entered the green-room arrayed in all his Eastern finery, expecting the flatteries of the company, she coarsely said, "Make room for the Royal Lamplighter," a rude speech which quite overset him, as well it might.

Once, "The Devil to Pay" was announced unexpectedly, when the actress was dining in the country with some persons of quality. She arrived too late, and was fined. She resented, not the fine, but the implied failure in her duty. Her defence is irresistible, and in her best style.

"I have great regret," she wrote, "in being obliged to say anything that looks like contention. I wish to be quiet myself, and I am sure I never laid any scheme in my life to make any one uneasy or unhappy. In regard to the affair of 'The Devil to Pay,' I sent in complaints to the managers by the prompter, to beg that it might not be done till the weather was cool, as the quickness of the shift puts me in a flurry, which gives me a violent swimming of the head. I beg you would do me the favour to let me know if it was by your order my money was stopped last Saturday. You was so good indeed last week to bid me take care or I should be catched — I thought you was laughing, I did not know it was a determined thing. It was never before expected of a performer to be in waiting when their names are not in the papers or bills; the public are witness for me whether I have ever neglected my business. You may (if you please to recollect) remember I have never disappointed you four times since you have been a manager; I always have had good health, and have ever been above subterfuge. I hope this stopping of money is not a French fashion; I believe you

will not find any part of the English laws that will support this sort of treatment of an actress, who has a right, from her character and service on the stage, to expect some kind of respect. I have never received any favours from you or Mr. Lacy, nor shall ever ask any of you, therefore hope you will be so good to excuse me for endeavouring to defend myself from what I think an injury; it has been too often repeated to submit to it any longer. You stopped four days' salary when I went to Dublin, though you gave me leave to go before the house shut up, and said you would do without me. If I had known your intention, I would not have lost any of my salary, as my agreement with Mr. Barry did not begin till our house had shut up. I had my money last stopped at the beginning of the season for not coming to rehearse two parts that I could repeat in my sleep, and which must have cost two guineas, besides the pleasure of coming to town.

"When I was sent to, I recollected I had given my servant leave to go out, as I did not want her, who had the key of all my things. Neither had I the necessary things ready if she had been at home. I had a friend's equipage come for me for Greenwich, to dine with them, and take my leave, as they are going to Bath. I was very unhappy after I was there, and the gentleman was so obliging as to send one of his grooms at half an hour after four to let you know I would come if

you could not do without me. I had a carriage ready with the horses put to when he came back; it wanted then some minutes to six. It is very happy for me that they happen to be people of consequence, who know the truth of what I say, and who will be very much surprised to hear how I have been treated.

"I am sure I have always done everything in my power to serve and oblige you. The first I have most undoubtedly succeeded in; the latter I have always been unfortunately unsuccessful in, though I have taken infinite pains. I have never envied you your equipage, nor grandeur, the fine fortune you have already, and must be still increasing. I have had but a very small share of the public money. You gave Mrs. Cibber £600 for playing sixty nights, and £300 to me for playing 180, out of which I can make it appear it cost me £100 in necessaries for the stage; sure you need not want to take anything from it."

We may be sure that the fine was remitted.

Mr. John Taylor, long one of the editors of the *Sun*, and who knew most of the actors, suggests that as she was eminent before Garrick's appearance, his love of excellence threw her and others in the shade, and she therefore took every opportunity of venting her spleen. This was only the popular view. "One night," he tells us, "as he was performing King Lear, she stood behind the scenes to observe him, and in spite of the rough-

ness of her nature was so deeply affected that she sobbed one minute and abused him the next, and at length, overcome by his pathetic touches, she hurried from the place with the following extraordinary tribute to the universality of his powers: 'D—n him, I believe he could act a gridiron.'"

This contention is often found when there is real regard.

The excellent Doctor Johnson, who knew most of the guild, and supported Mrs. Abington's benefit, highly esteemed our actress. So sterling a nature had the true instinct for appreciating what was sterling in others. "He used, at one time, to go occasionally to the greenroom of Drury Lane Theatre, where he was much regarded by the players, and was very easy and facetious with them." This is Mr. Langton's account. "He had a very high opinion of Mrs. Clive's comic powers, and conversed with her more than with any of them." He said, "Clive is a grand thing to sit by, she always understands what you say." "A good thing to sit by," was no light praise from the doctor, and she said of him, "I love to sit by Doctor Johnson, he always entertains me." His judicial opinion upon her acting was equally favourable. "Mrs. Porter in her vehemence of rage, and Mrs. Clive in the sprightliness of humour, I have never seen equalled. What Clive did best, she did better than Garrick; but she could not do half so many things well; she was a better romp

than any I ever saw in nature." This nice distinction shows how admirable a critic Johnson was. Here he was surely right; for the romp on the stage should be better than any in nature; as histrionic characters should not aim at mere imitation, but at the selection of the best points.[1]

Only a few months later we find her in the most gracious mood. And here again we see the sensitiveness of a regard which she believed was unrequited. On Nov. 27, 1768, she writes:

"DEAR SIR: — I am most extremely obliged to you for your very polite letter. How charming you can be when you are good; I believe there is only one person in the world who has never known the difference.[2] I shall certainly make use of the favour you offer me; it gives me a double pleasure, — the entertainment my friends will receive from your performance, and the being convinced that you have a sort of sneaking kindness for your Pivy. I suppose I shall have you tapping me on the shoulder (as you do to Violante) when I bid

[1] When every one was praising Garrick's "Archer," in the disguise of a "footman," how admirably he did the servant, "you would take him for a real one," — "No! no!" said the sage, "it is not a good performance, he does not let the gentleman break out through the footman." This is real dramatic criticism, and instruction for the actor, of the highest order.

[2] The manager has endorsed this:

> "A love-letter — the first I ever had
> from that truly great comedian, Mrs. Clive."

you farewell, and desiring one tender look before we part, though perhaps you may recollect and toss the pancake into the cinders. You see I never forget your good things. Pray make my best compliments to Mrs. Garrick, and believe I shall always have sincere pleasure when I can assure you

"I am, your obliged and humble servant,

"C. CLIVE."

It must be confessed there is a peculiar entertainment in this production, a delicacy, and truth, surprising in one commonly believed to have been of a coarse temperament.

When she had finally made up her mind to depart from the theatre, she made a last display of frowardness. It seems likely that this was owing to a sense of pique and wounded pride, for she expected, no doubt, that great exertions would be made to detain her. Garrick, however, in most instances, was inclined to take his actors at their word, and was, perhaps, relieved at the idea of being released from their ceaseless jars and discussions. This soreness was shown in the ungraciousness in which the actress announced her departure. When it came to the point, however, he deputed his prompter, Hopkins, to ask if she were serious; to him she disdained to give any satisfaction. George Garrick, the stage-manager, was next sent, but she told him bluntly that the

manager himself must come if he wished to learn her sentiments. Mr. Garrick arrived, and, with many compliments on her services, hoped that, for her own sake, she would remain. She scornfully hinted that he meant his own interest. He then asked "How much she was worth?" meaning what she valued her services at. She answered, briskly, "As much as himself." He, with a smile, assured her that he had not put by so much as she fancied; when she answered him that "she knew when she had enough, but he never did." After this display of rude temper, the complacent manager again begged of her to change her mind, and stay with them for a few years longer. But she bluntly refused; she was tired of the trouble and annoyance of stage life. On which he prepared to take his leave, assuring her that he deeply regretted her loss; when, with a last burst, she said "she hated hypocrisy," and that "she knew he would light up candles for joy at her going, only for the money it would cost him." Here again we see only the vexation of a jealous spirit. The Drury Lane greenroom was filled with gossips of the Tate Wilkinson pattern, and particularly with dissatisfied ladies, who were glad to repeat Mr. Garrick's presumed speeches and opinions. Long after she solemnly made confession that all this time he had no greater and more genuine admirer.

As was to be expected, Garrick did all he could to gratify the actress, in what he would have called

"her last moments." He offered to play for her in one of his best characters. This favour she acknowledged affectionately, though a little tartness breaks out in her allusion to her husband.

Mrs. Clive to Mr. Garrick.

"LONDON, April 14, 1769.

"DEAR SIR: — I could not stay till the 24th to thank you for your very kind letter. I am extremely glad to hear you continue to be so well. I have often enquired after you of your brother George. Now do not say to yourself, ay, for your own sake; for when I heard you was in such great pain, I was most sincerely sorry. In the next place, to be sure, I am glad you are well for the sake of my audience, who will have the pleasure to see their own Don Felix. What signifies fifty-two? They had rather see *the* Garrick and *the* Clive at a hundred and four, than any of the moderns; — the ancients, you know, have always been admired. I do assure you, I am at present in such health and such spirits, that when I recollect I am an old woman, I am astonished. My dear town are giving me such applause every time they see me, that I am in great fear for myself on my benefit night; I shall be overcome with kindness. Indeed, I have every day fresh instances of the public affection for me. Lord Clive has behaved in a noble manner; he sent me the most polite note, and fifty pounds for

his box. I am greatly obliged to Sir William Stanhope: if he should be at Bath when you receive this, I beg you would do me the favour to return my thanks to him; I hope I shall have the pleasure of doing it at Twickenham. You are very much mistaken if you imagine I shall be sorry to hear Mr. Clive is well. I thank God I have no malice or hatred to anybody; besides, it is so long ago since I thought he used me ill, that I have quite forgot it. I am glad he is well and happy.

"Pray make my best respects to Mrs. Garrick, who I hope is so well as not to want the waters. I am, dear sir,

"Your most sincere friend and humble servant,

"C. CLIVE."

Clive was not one of the class who make their farewell bow only to return. She had formed her resolution to retire in the plenitude of her powers, and adhered to it. She was now but fifty-eight years old, and might have entertained the town for fully ten years more, with mutual advantage. But she knew the truth of the line, —

"Inglorious lags the veteran on the stage," —

whether the stage be one of politics, or any other.

The night fixed was April 24th, and the plays were "The Wonder," which Garrick also chose for his own departing effort, with "Lethe," and in

which she gave her incomparable "Fine Lady." The rush for places was enormous. As the bill has it, "No tickets have been given out but to those ladies and gentlemen who have the places secured in the pit and boxes; and to prevent any mistake or confusion, no box tickets will be admitted into the gallery. Mrs. Clive begs the favour of those whose places are in the pit to be there by half an hour after five, and to let their servants come to keep them a quarter before four. Pit and boxes laid together." That is, the pit was charged at box price.

Mr. Garrick played, and played his best we may be sure. In both pieces Mr. Walpole furnished an epilogue, a form of relation between audience and actor (better surely than the speech now in fashion), which has long passed away.

"With glory satiate, from the bustling stage,
Still in his prime — and much about my age,
Imperial Charles (if Robertson says true)
Retiring, bade the jarring world adieu!
Thus I, long honoured with your partial praise,
(A debt my swelling heart with tears repays!
Scarce can I speak — forgive the grateful pause)
Resign the noblest triumph, your applause.
Content with humble means, yet proud to own,
I owe my pittance to your smiles alone;
To private shades I bear the golden prize,
The meed of favour in a nation's eyes;
A nation brave, and sensible, and free —
Poor Charles! how little when compar'd to me!

His mad ambition had disturb'd the globe,
And sanguine which he quitted was the robe.
Too blest, could he have dar'd to tell mankind,
When power's full goblet he forbore to quaff,
That, conscious of benevolence of mind,
For thirty years he had but made them laugh.
Ill was that mind with sweet retirement pleased,
The very cloister that he sought he teased;
And sick, at once, both of himself and peace,
He died a martyr to unwelcome ease.
Here ends the parallel, my generous friends,
My exit no such tragic fate attends;
I will not die — let no vain panic seize you —
If I repent, I'll come again and please you."

That last sight of the audience, nightly friends and companions for many years, — a part of life itself, — must be a painful moment. Garrick declared that the thought was agony, and a sort of theatrical death. More acute still must be the feelings in the dull monotonous evenings that follow. Mrs. Siddons, as the night drew on, would repeat with a sort of wistful distress, "Now they are filling the theatre! Now the curtain has risen." She would recall the uproar that used to greet her. It was like the chill on waking from a delightful dream. Now there was only an old lady seated by her humdrum fireside.

CHAPTER VII.

Twickenham — Little Strawberry Hill — "Jemmy Raftor" — Friendship with Walpole — Miss Pope.

T has been generally repeated that, on her retirement from the stage, Mr. Walpole invited her to take possession of a small house at Twickenham, where she resided for the rest of her life. The fact is, this generous present was made to her nearly twenty years before, and we find her living at "little Strawberry Hill" so early as 1753 or 1754. Walpole had a genuine and steady regard for her, founded perhaps on the enjoyment of her society, for her ready wit and stories entertained him. She was a constant guest at his house, the companion of his walks, and often enjoyed his hospitality at little suppers.

We now see the favourite actress retired, and living altogether at pleasant Twickenham. After "the youth of folly," came "an old age of cards," of agreeable society — gossip it might be — and cordial friends. It is not generally known that, before taking up her abode at little Strawberry Hill, she was established at a cottage of Mr. Walpole's known as "little Marble Hill," long

since pulled down, its place being taken by a pretentious mansion. This had been her residence till little Strawberry Hill was got ready for her.

The house which Mr. Walpole so handsomely presented to his friend is still to be seen on the roadside, a little beyond the old town of Twickenham, and facing the meadows across which he so often walked to pay her a visit. An old and rather decayed red brick structure, two stories in height, with stabling and gardens attached, and altogether of more pretension than would be imagined from the description. We can identify it by the arched sham Gothic windows, in the style of old Strawberry Hill. The gate displays two great stone acorns, but the whole has been rather disfigured by modern additions. It is indeed quite an historical residence. After her death, he persuaded the attractive Misses Berry — pets and *protégées* of his — to take up their residence there. They remained for many years, and were an inexpressible source of comfort and entertainment to their host. Twickenham, when Clive first went to reside, had quite a number of remarkable people living there, — Sir John Hawkins, Lady Tweeddale, George Steevens, and others. She had, therefore, plenty of friends and acquaintances to make her retirement at this old-fashioned place pleasant.[1]

[1] The writer, when a boy, lived close to Twickenham, and recalls the choice and pleasant society — mostly of a literary cast

Here we find a member of the family — her brother, James Rafter, "Jemmy," as he was called, to whom the worthy Clive had clung all her life. She had again and again given him benefits, played for him, and tried to get him on — but fruitlessly. He was, as Lord Nuneham described him, "a wretched actor, hideous in person and pace, and vulgarly awkward in his general appearance — but a man of some information, of much observation, and possessing an extraordinary fund of original humour. In his talent of relating a story he was unrivalled." One of his stories no doubt he told with humour, that of a town lady, — who being asked why she did not live in the country, said "she had just bought some rural object — a cuckoo clock!" This entertaining fellow attracted Mr. Walpole, who conceived quite a friendship for him, and always asked him with his more gifted sister. "Raftor," he says in 1770, "has left the stage. Mrs. Clive has very kindly taken him to live entirely with her, and I hear he is exceedingly happy at it."

— then found there. In that quaint row of antique houses of Queen Anne's time, now in decay, lived a sister of Horace Smith, who had often heard Miss Pope talk of her friend Clive and her glories. It was then in a sort of fashion: the "Jerry Builder" had not come that way, and it was but little altered from the time of Clive. At every turn there were old-fashioned houses, old inns, and foot-paths across the meadows; while in all the "great houses," distinguished tenants were residing.

At all *petits soupers* Mr. Raftor figured. No matter how fine the company, there the brother and sister were to be found. Even at the coronation, when seats were so eagerly sought, Walpole found him a place at his town house, among the noble ladies. When Twickenham was scared by highway robberies, — people being stopped on the roads, and Mrs. Clive's house broken into, — he declared that he would make Raftor his Sancho Panza — "only he has more humour." In 1753, he writes: "I met Mrs. Clive two nights ago, and told her I had been in the meadows, but would walk no more there, for here was her world." "Well," says she, "and don't you like the World. I hear it was very clever last Thursday." And again in 1754: "My chief employ is planting at Mrs. Clive's, whither I remove all my superabundancies. I have lately planted the green lane that leads from her garden to the common." "Well," said she, "when it is done, what shall we call it?" "Why," said I, "what would you call it but Drury Lane?" This was ready pleasantry. Later, when she was regularly installed, for during her theatrical career she only came there after the season, he gave the little *maison* the happy name of Cliveden. When such guests as Mr. Conway, and Lady Ailesbury, and Lady Townshend, were staying with him, he would take them over to see the actress, and sup with her. Lady Townshend, notorious for her strange coarse speeches, being

taken over Strawberry Hill, said to the host, "that it would be a very pleasant place, if Mrs. Clive's face did not rise upon it and make it so hot." One evening in 1760, he met an odd adventure in one of their walks, which is described in his best style. "I was sitting with Mrs. Clive, her sister and brother, on the bench near the road, at the end of her long walk. We heard a violent scolding, and, looking out, saw a pretty woman, standing by a high chaise, in which was a young fellow and the coachman riding. The damsel had lost her hat, her cloak, her temper, and her senses; and was more drunk, and more angry, than you can conceive. She stood cursing and swearing at the young man in an outrageous style, and when she had vented all the oaths she could think of, she at last wished *perfidion* might seize him. You may imagine how we laughed. The fair intoxicate turned around and cried, 'Who is it? What! Mrs. Clive! Kitty Clive! No, Kitty Clive would never behave so.' I wish you could have seen my neighbour's confusion. She certainly did not grow paler than ordinary." Occasionally he could be merry at the expense of his friend's full-blown face. She had been left a legacy by a neighbour, Lord Radnor, only £50, but was immensely elated. "You never saw anything so droll," he writes, "as Mrs. Clive's countenance," is the good-natured remark of Walpole, on this event, "between the heat of the summer,

the pride in her legacy, and her efforts to appear concerned."

In the year 1760, she gave him an agreeable supper, "with Miss West, my niece Cholmondely, and Murphy, the writing actor, who is very good company, and two or three more. Mrs. Cholmondely is very lively, you know how entertaining the Clive is." Mrs. Cholmondely, we may assume, was Peg Woffington's rather boisterous sister.

She had at this time some faithful friends whose regard was the solace of her decline. There was her trusty brother, Mr. Walpole, and her "dear Pope." "Easy, natural Miss Pope," cried Elia, as he dwelt on her part in "The School for Scandal," the original Mrs. Candour, a title to boast of. She was in fact Clive's pupil, who, having a fancy for her from the first, took immense pains to school her in the true tradition. This admirable actress of the good old solid school was so intimately connected with her friend in every department, that she was considered a sort of reflection of Clive's character and talent. There was the same honest independence, the same sense of duty to their profession, the same clear and open good sense in both their lives. A true affection and sympathy bound them together to the last. There was no jealousy in Clive's nature, and she saw her friend take over her own characters with satisfaction, and was eager that she should

make as good an impression as herself. "What principally matured her talents was to have found so excellent a model before her as Mrs. Clive," says a contemporary account, "being in this actress's walk, she had the advantage of copying her inimitable manner and humour; and though the ascent was great, emulation was still greater.

"Mrs. Clive being on the retiring plan almost on Miss Pope's commencement, gave her an opportunity to be let occasionally into some of the former's principal parts; such as Phillis in 'The Conscious Lovers,' Beatrice in 'Much Ado About Nothing,' etc., each of which she was received in with particular compliment. But what called out the full extent of her powers was the character of Nell, in Coffey's ballad farce of 'The Devil to Pay;' a circumstance the more remarkable, as it was in this very part, thirty years before, that Mrs. Clive gained the summit of her reputation. Though this at first looked against her, yet it turned out a point in her favour. Those who had seen Mrs. Clive in the character, or remembered her first appearance in it, were pleased with the thoughts of so able a successor." Churchill was more enthusiastic on her merits than he was about Clive:

> "With all the native vigour of sixteen,
> Among the merry troop conspicuous seen,
> See lively Pope advance in jig and trip,
> Corinna, Cherry, Honeycomb, and Snip.

Not without art, but yet to nature true,
She charms the town with humour just yet new.
Cheer'd by her promise, we the less deplore
The fatal time when Clive shall be no more."

The lines "not without art," etc., should be the comedian's guide.

"I well remember," says Wilkinson, who was present, "on the second night of 'The Confederacy,' Mrs. Clive called Miss Pope into the green-room, before her going on the stage as Corinna, and said to her, 'My dear Pope,' — a sweet apellation indeed, from Clive, — 'you played particularly well on Saturday, as a young actress, but take from me a piece of advice, which I would have every performer attend to. You acted with great and deserved approbation, but to-night you must endeavour to act better, and expect to receive less applause. The violent thunder of applause last Saturday, on your first appearance, was not all deserved, it was only benevolently bestowed to give you the pleasing information that they were well delighted, and had their warmest wishes that you would hereafter merit the kindness they bestowed you.'" This plain-spoken useful piece of advice was not thrown away, and would be found not unprofitable by all performers.

Once, on the eve of Garrick's retirement, the sensible Miss Pope was betrayed into a little foolishness, which was unlike her usual self. All her companions were worrying the manager with their

claims and complaints. After many years' service, when the formality of renewing her engagement, as a matter of course, was suggested, she wrote to ask for an increase of salary. The managers replied with compliments on the value of her talents, — her place would be with difficulty supplied, — and trusting she would continue with them as before. She wrote back in irritation, that as to her merit it had been more than overpaid by the public, without even a paragraph to prejudice them. She would put aside affection and think only, like the Swiss, of pay. She received a rather cold reply to this taunt, with a reminder that they had lost Mrs. Barry from wishing to keep her, and declining to make any advance. The actress indignantly left the theatre. It was plain there was here some other grievance. But as the season drew on and she found herself without an engagement at the great theatre, she repented of her folly, and applied to her friend Clive, to bring about a reconciliation, who sent "Jimmy" Raftor to the manager. But he declined to receive her back. She applied to him herself in a very strong letter. She accused herself of a foolish vanity, but her heart was not bad. "As I know of no excuse to palliate my wrong conduct, I must rely upon your generosity still, to forgive and be my friend." But Garrick was inflexible. As the Duke of Wellington put it later, "It was no mistake, and should be no mistake." "The expressions,

'want of affection,' 'turning Swiss,'" he said, "were as harsh as unexpected, and had given him great pain;" what rankled deeper, though he did not name it, was the allusion to newspaper puffs. Even after his answer, he had waited two months, hoping she might see her mistake and return to her duty, and this in spite of her incivility to one who had always been her best friend. Now her place was filled. He was deeply grieved. The actress submitted, and with a heavy heart went to Ireland. But her case was in the hands of a faithful ally. The irresistible Kitty took up the affair, as if it were her own, and was not to be denied. Never was cause pleaded so effectively. In a charming natural letter of compliment to him, on his impending retirement, which would have done credit to one of the professional letter writers, she appeals to him for the unfortunate Pope.

"Now let me say one word about my poor unfortunate friend, Miss Pope. I know how much she disobliged you, and if I had been in your place I believe I should have acted just as you did. But by this time I hope you have forgot your resentment, and will look upon her late behaviour as having been taken with a dreadful fit of vanity, which for the time took her senses from her, and having been tutored by an affected heart, which helped to turn her head; but recollect her in the

other light, a faithful creature to you, on whom you could always depend, certainly a good actress, amiable in her character, both in being a very modest woman and very good to her family, and to my certain knowledge has the greatest regard for you. Now, my dear Mr. Garrick, I hope it is not yet too late to reinstate her before you quit your affairs here. I beg it! I entreat it! I shall look on it as the greatest favour you can confer on

"Your ever obliged friend,

"C. CLIVE."

This we find endorsed "My Pivy excellent."

Need it be said that Garrick did not reject the suit of his faithful Pivy? The glad news of her forgiveness and restoration was despatched to the actress, who was even bidden to name her own terms. No wonder she wrote that her heart was full, and that she could not express her feelings. She was his prodigal daughter, and was out of her senses with happiness. The whole credit was owing to the worthy honest Clive.

Garrick's own retirement, as we have said, was now at hand, and she took the opportunity to unfold to him, in characteristic style, — what, perhaps he never suspected before, viz., — that through all their bickerings, it was not dislike or disdain that was at work; it was her pride that would not bend to own his superiority and many good qualities.

"D—n him, he can act a gridiron!" was but a partial expression of her admiration. We have smiled at her rude turns and sad spelling, but here nature and warmth of heart furnished her with an admirable style:

Mrs. Clive to Mr. Garrick.

"TWICKENHAM, June 24, 1776.

"DEAR SIR:—Is it really true that you have put an end to the glory of Drury Lane Theatre? If it is so, let me congratulate my dear Mr. and Mrs. Garrick on their approaching happiness. I know what it will be; you cannot yet have an idea of it; but if you should still be so wicked not to be satisfied with that unbounded, uncommon degree of fame you have received as an actor, and which no other actor ever did receive—nor no other actor ever can receive; I say, if you should still long to be dipping your fingers in their theatrical pudding (now without plums), you will be no Garrick for the Pivy. In the height of public admiration for you, when you were never mentioned with any other appellation but Mr. Garrick, the charming man, the fine fellow, the delightful creature, both by men and ladies, when they were admiring everything you did and everything you scribbled, at this very time the Pivy was a living witness that they did not know, nor could they be sensible of half your perfections. I have seen you

with your magical hammer in your hand, endeavouring to beat your ideas into the heads of creatures who had none of their own. I have seen you with lamb-like patience endeavouring to make them comprehend you, and I have seen you when that could not be done. I have seen your lamb turned into a lion. By this your great labour and pains the public was entertained; they thought they all acted very fine — they did not see you pull the wires.

"There are people now on the stage to whom you gave their consequence; they think themselves very great. Now let them go on in their new parts without your leading strings, and they will soon convince the world what this genius is. I have always said this to everybody, even when your horses and mine were in their highest prancing. While I was under your control, I did not say half the fine things I thought of you, because it looked like flattering, and you know your Pivy was always proud; besides, I thought you did not like me then; but now I am sure you do, which made me send this letter."

CHAPTER VIII.

Battle with "the Taxes" — Letter to Miss Pope — Colman — Last Letter to Garrick — Mr. Cole — Story of a Footman — Death of Mrs. Clive.

MR. WALPOLE tells with enjoyment of a conflict which his friend got into with the "taxes," and "her tax-gatherer has gone off," he writes, "and she must pay her window-lights over again; and the road before the door is very bad, and the parish won't mend it." How the "combustible" lady took this state of things is related by her neighbour, Miss Hawkins, whose father, —

> "Sir John Hawkins
> Without his shoes or stalkins," —

was obliged to interfere:

"I remember a reply of the same hue, which she made to two very decent respectful men, then in office as surveyors of the roads in the parish, on my father's sending them to her, as being the acting magistrate of the place, to demand some payment which she had refused. It was in the

laconic terms, 'By the living G—, I will not pay it.' I suppose this might destroy entirely all intercourse with our house, for she was of course compelled to break her oath. I suppose it was to show 'what some actresses can do, what some will do,' that she worked for the Holbein chamber at Strawberry Hill the carpet with blue tulips and yellow foliage.

"Mrs. Clive, the comic actress, I believe, by her agreeable or rather diverting society, paid rent for what is called little Strawberry Hill. Her memory still survives in the place, and her bounty to her indigent relations is recorded on a tablet affixed to the wall of the church. A virtue less known, and perhaps less easily credited, considering her manners in private and her cast of characters in public, was her perfect abstinence from spirituous liquors. She told a lady, her neighbour, in Great Queen Street, Lincoln's Inn Fields, from whom I had it, that she believed she could say more than most players could, that she never kept any of these exhilarating resources in her house.

"When one of her maid servants, to whom she had given an admission to see her act, was asked how she liked her mistress on the stage, she said, 'She saw no difference between her there and at home.' It is most probable from this that the character in which she had seen her was Nell in the farce of 'The Devil to Pay.'

"I have heard it said that she once attempted Shylock, and with the Jewish accent; but the effect was too ludicrous to be endured.

"Mrs. Clive visited my father and mother, but on my mother's running out of the house one evening, when she had called accidentally, to prevent her alighting from her carriage, as the small-pox had made its appearance amongst us and she knew Mrs. Clive not to have had it, utterly insensible to the politeness of her attention at a moment of such anxiety, she roughly replied: 'It was not you I wanted to see; it was your husband. Send him out!'"

Miss Pope used to recall her visits to Twickenham to see her friend, and those which Mr. Walpole paid them. He could be very agreeable, she said, but often "very snarling and sarcastic." "She was one of my earliest and best friends," said she, speaking of her dear Clive; "I usually spent a month with her during the summer recess, at her cottage. One fine morning I set off in the Twickenham passage-boat to pay her a visit. When we came to Vauxhall, I took out a book and read." "Oh, ma'am," said one of the watermen, "I hoped we were to have the pleasure of hearing you talk." "I took the hint," added the benevolent lady, "and put up my book." A pleasing, good-humoured trait. Not long before Mrs. Clive's death, we find these two old friends corresponding affectionately.

Mrs. Clive to Miss Pope.

"TWICKENHAM, October 17, 1784.

"MY DEAR POPY: — The jack I must have, and I suppose the cook will be as much delighted with it as a fine lady with a birthday suit. I send you walnuts which are fine, but pray be moderate in your admiration, for they are dangerous dainties. John has carried about to my neighbours above six thousand, and he tells me there are as many still left, indeed it is a most wonderful tree. Mrs. Prince has been robbed at two o'clock, at noon, of her gold watch and four guineas, and at the same time our two justices of sixpence apiece; they had like to be shott, for not having more. Everybody enquires after you, and I deliver your compts. Poor Mrs. Hart is dead — well spoken of by everybody. I pity the poor old Weassel that is left behind.

"Adieu, my dear Popy, yours ever,

"C. CLIVE."

"The jack must carry six or seven and twenty pounds, the waterman shall bring the money when I know what."

Miss Pope to Mrs. Clive.

"Monday, Feb. 22, 1779.

"DEAR MADAM: — I have attempted several times to sit down and answer your very kind

letter, and have as often been interrupted, but at length I am determined you must know I never think of writing but when I fancy I have some novelty to relate, and at present only one theme obtains, which is respecting the admirals. This always ends in breaking the windows . . .

"I am much mortified you did not spend Ash Wednesday with us, as the whole party, I believe, sincerely expected it, and would have been glad to see you: the Roffeys came to town on purpose, and inquired after you immediately. Miss Griffith spent the day with Miss Cadogan, who still continues to weep for Mr. Garrick, like another Niobe, and so romantic, it is astonishing: I believe love is at the bottom with both of them, for that seems the most natural; however, they say you are vastly affected, and that you all wept the other morning like the ladies in 'The Funeral,' and Mr. Raftor came in like Counsellor Puzzle to fill up the group. I wish I could give you something to laugh at, for I do not think weeping becoming to you or to me: at least it should be seldom . . . What reason you have to applaud yourself for your conduct: every comfort and every hour you enjoy convince me you were right, and I pray heartily I may tread in your steps (at least in some degree) to share such a portion of happiness. I am tired with subscriptions, for (I am sorry to say it) worthless people; yet did not one contribute, one would be considered a barbarian. They are setting on foot

something of that sort for Mrs. Bellamy, who is, I hear, starving; she has wearied everybody with her letters, and is penniless, without food, fire, or candle, — in short nothing can be more wretched: and I should not be surprised if some ladies in the theatre, who now carry their heads very high, were reduced sometime or other to the same state."

Horace Smith, who knew and admired her, has kept a pleasing sketch of her. "Miss Pope's private alias, in certain theatrical circles, was Mrs. Candour; originating partly from her playing that part, and partly from her readiness to undertake the defence of any person who happened to be run down. I owe it to truth to declare my conviction that, in adopting that course, not a particle of irony and sarcasm was mingled with her encomiums. I never heard her speak ill of any human being. I have sometimes been even exasperated by her benevolence. In cases of the most open delinquency I could never entice her into indignation. 'I adore my profession,' I have heard her say more than once. She had bad health; she was attached to a young man who died at Monmouth; she is devoted to her sister's children. She gave an evening party at her new residence, about a twelvemonth after her retreat from the stage, at which I remember the late Mr. Justice Grose was present, as well as a great number of other highly respectable persons of either sex, many of them, as

I then learned, from the purlieus of St. James's Palace. Here I beheld her in society for the last time. She was shortly afterward attacked by a stupor of the brain, and this once lively and amiable woman, who had entertained me repeatedly with anecdotes of people of note in her earlier days, sat quietly in an armchair by the fireside, patting the head of her poodle dog, and smiling at what passed in conversation, without being at all conscious of the meaning of what was uttered."

A letter of condolence to sprightly writer, who had given her his Mrs. Heidleburg:

To Mr. George Colman.

"April 12, 1771.

"SIR:—I hope you heard that I sent my servant to town to inquire how you did; indeed I have been greatly surprised and sincerely concerned for your unexpected distress; there is nothing can be said upon these melancholy occasions to a person of understanding. Fools cannot feel, people of sense must, and will, and when they have sank their spirits till they are ill, will find that nothing but submission can give any consolation to inevitable misfortunes. I shall be extreamly glad to see you, and think it would be very right, if you would come and dine hear two or three days in a week, it will change the sceen, and by the sincer-

ity of your wellcome, you may fancy yourself at home.

"I am, dearly, your obligd. hum. Servt.,

"C. CLIVE."

In her retirement we find her old "friend-enemy" Garrick reappearing occasionally. Her letters to him showed, as we before said, what was the regard and affection subsisting between these two sterling natures, now that all cause of friction was removed. Kitty would sometimes rally her old manager in lively fashion, as when she heard he was devoting himself to vestry duties.

Mrs. Clive to Mr. Garrick.

"I schreamed at your parish business. I think I see you in your churchwardenship quareling for not making those brown loaves big enough; but for God's sake never think of being a justice of the peace, for the people will quarel on purpose to be brought before you to hear you talk, so that you may have as much business upon the lawn, as you had upon the boards. If I should live to be thaw'd, I will come to town on purpose to kiss you; and in the summer, as you say, I hope we shall see each other ten times as often, when we will talk, and dance, and sing, and send our hearers laughing to their beds."

And again:

> "O jealousey thou raging pain,
> Where shall I find my piece again?"

"I am in a great fuss. Pray what is the meaning of a quarter of a hundred of the Miss Moors coming purring about you with their poems, and plays, and romancies; what, is the Pivy to be roused, and I don't understand it. Mrs. Garrick has been so good to say she would spare me a little corner of your heart, and I can tell the Miss Moors they shall not have one morsel of it. What do they pretend to take it by force of lines. If that's the case I shall write such versses as shall make them stare againe, and send them to Bristol with a flea in their ear! Here have I two letters, one and not one line, nay, you write to the Poulterer's woman rather than the Pivy, and order her to bring me the note: and the poor creature is so proud of a letter from you, that it has quite turn'd her head, and instead of picking her Poultry, she is dancing about her shop, with a wisp of straw in her hand, like the poor Ophelia, singing:

> "'How shou'd I your true love know.'

And I must tell you, if you don't write to me directly and tell me a great deal of news, I believe I shall sing the next of the mad songs myself. I see your run always goes on, which gives me great pleasure — I shall be glad if you will lend it me

(Colley Cibber); my love to my dear Mrs. Garrick. I suppose you have had a long letter of thanks from Miss Pope. I have had one from her all over transport. I feel vast happiness about that afair, and shall ever remember it as a great obligation you have confered on your

"PIVY CLIVE."

Endorsed, "Pivy's letter about Miss Hannah More."

The Same to the Same.

"TWICKENHAM, January 13, 1774.

"DEAR SIR: — I should suppose, when you see Twickenham, you will not presently imagine whom the letter can come from, you have so entirely forgot me. I write because I am importuned by the bearer; and to solicit a great man looks as if one had power, which, you know, is a charming thing. Mr. C—— tells me he knows you very well: he lives at Twickenham, is a wine-merchant, lives in good credit, and has for many years. I have taken my wine of him these four years, which is the reason he thinks I ought to trouble you with a letter. He wants to get his son into the excise. He tells me you are at the head of the commission, and can do whatever you please: you could I know in former days; and if you can now, and will, Mr. C—— will be very glad of it. I do not know anything of the young man, there-

fore cannot recommend him, but I suppose his father can, for he is a fine chatter box; he will be up and tell you everything about him.

"Pray how does my dear Mrs. Garrick do? for I will love her, because I am sure she would me, if you would let her. But you are a Rudesby (?) yourself, and it is your fault that she does not take notice of me.

"I might date this letter from the Ark; we are so surrounded with water that it is impossible for any carriage to come to me, or for me to stir out, so that at present my heavenly place is a little develish. I believe I must win a house in the Adelphi, and come to town in winter; but when I come I shall not have the happiness to see Macklin in 'Macbeth.' What a pity it is he should make an end of himself in such a fine part.

"Your friend Jemmy and Mrs. Mestiver desire their compliments to yourself and Mrs. Garrick, I suppose we shall all meet next summer at Mr. Walpole's.

"Adieu, yours ever,

"C. CLIVE."

Mrs. Clive to Mr. Garrick.

"TWICKENHAM, March 22, 1775.

"There is no such being now as Pivy, she has been killed by the cruelty of Garrick; but the Clive thank God is still alive, and alive like to be,

and did intend to call you to give an account, for your wicked wishes to her. But having been told of your good deeds and great acting events, I concluded you was in too much conceit with yourself to listen to my complaints. I must needs say that I admire you with the rest of the world, for your great goodness to Miss Moore (More): the protection you gave her play. I daresay she was sensible you were of the greatest service to her; she was sure everything you touched would turn into gold, and though she had great merit in her writing, still your affection for tragedy children was a great happiness to her, for you dandled it and fondled it, and then carried it in your arms to town, to muse. Who behaved so kindly to it that it run alone in a month.

"I must now mention the noblest action of your life, your generosity to nephew David; all the world is repeating your praises. The people who always envied you and wished to detract from you, always declaring you loved money too much, ever to part from it, now they will feel foolish, and look contemptible: all that I can say is, I wish that heaven had made me such an uncle.

"I hope my dear Mrs. Garrick is perfect well; happy she must ever be; she has a disposition which will make her so in all situations. You and I, you know, can alter our tempers with the weathercock. We are all here at present but queer. Mrs. Mastivre is not sick (but sorry);

your Jemsey is nither one thing nor the other — always dreaming of Garrick and the opera.

"Everybody is raving against Mr. Sheridan for his supineness. The country is very dull: we have not twenty people in the village, but still it is better than London. Let me see you — let me hear from you: and tell me all the news you can to divert your ever affectionate and forgiving

"C. CLIVE.

"Our brother and sister join in compliments to your lady and self."

Mr. Garrick to Mrs. Clive.

"HAMPTON, Friday morning.

"Has not the nasty bile which so often confines, and has heretofore tormented you, kept me at home, I should have been at your feet three days ago. If your heart (wonderful combustible like my own!) has played off all the squibs and rockets which lately occasioned a little cracking and bouncing about me, and can receive again the more gentle and pleasing fireworks of love and friendship, I will be with you at six this evening, to revive by the help of those spirits in your tea-kettle lamp, that flame which was almost blown out by the flouncing of your petticoat, when my name was mentioned. . . . Can my Pivy know so little of me, to think that I prefer the clack of lords and ladies, to the enjoyment of humour and

genius ? . . . In short, your misconceptions about that *fête champêtre* (devil take the word) has made me so cross about everything that belongs to it, that I curse all squibs, crackers, rockets, air balloons, mines, serpents, and catherine-wheels, and can think of nothing, and wish for nothing, but laugh, gig, humour, fun, pun, conundrum, carri witchet, and Catherine Clive. I am ever, my Pivy's most constant and loving,

"D. GARRICK."

Mrs. Clive to Mr. Garrick.

"TWICKENHAM, January 23, 1774.

"WONDERFUL SIR: — Who have been for thirty years contradicting an old established proverb, 'you cannot make bricks without straw;' but you have done what is infinitely more difficult, for you have made actors and actresses without genius, that is, you have made them pass for such, which has answered your end, though it has given you infinite trouble. You never took much pains with yourself, for you could not help acting well, therefore I do not think you have much merit in that, though to be sure it has been very assuaging to yourself, as well as the rest of the world; for while you are laughing at your own conceits, you was at the same time sure they would cram your iron chests. What put the fancy in my head, was your desiring a good character of young Crofts.

It is a sad thing, some people would say, that such a paltry being as an exciseman cannot get his bread unless he has behaved well in the world; and yet it is so perfectly right, that everybody would have the same caution, not to give good characters when they did not deserve them, nor receive people into your family for servants, or any kind of business, who had them not. If this was made an unalterable rule, the world must in time become all sorts of good people.

"I send the enclosed, which may be depended on. Mr. Costard is our rector, one of the most learned and best sort of men in the world. They say he has more knowledge in the stars and among all the sky-people than anybody, so that most of us take him for a conjurer. I ought to make an apology for being so troublesome, when I come to town I will make my excuse, when I shall at the same time see Mrs. Garrick, which will always be a real pleasure to, dear sir,

"Yours,

"C. Pivy."

The spirit and vivacity of these epistles will strike every one, and they deservedly excited the admiration of that accomplished critic, Mr. John Forster.

To the very last the spirited actress sustained her humour. When some Jewish visitors excused them from going to see Strawberry Hill, as the

day was one of their feast, she suggested that "they should change their religion," a happy compliment, moreover, to the host. In 1766, when Lady Shelburne was coming to Twittenham, "you know," Walpole wrote, "Lady Suffolk is deaf, and I have talked much of a charming old person I have met at Paris — Madame Du Deffand — who is blind." "Well," said Clive, "if the new countess is but lame, I shall have no chance of ever seeing you." No wonder he designed some venison for "the *demidium animæ meæ*, Mrs. Clive (a pretty round half)," he adds. His letters, indeed, quite help us to follow her in that sleepy district until her death, and a very pleasant sketch they furnish. Thus in 1773, "except being extremely ill, Mrs. Clive is extremely well. The papers said she was to act at Covent Garden.[1] She has printed a very proper answer in the *Evening Post*." When he invited a lady of quality down, Mrs. Clive was held out as an attraction:

To Lady Cecilia Johnstone.

"Aug. 19, 1777.

"Our abdicated monarch Lear,
And bonny Dame Cadwallader,

[1] When Mr. and Mrs. Bancroft revived "Masks and Faces," at the Haymarket Theatre, Miss Wade, who performed the part of Mrs. Clive, used Kitty's own walking-stick. It had a china crutch top, and was a present from Walpole to Mrs. Damer, from whom it passed to my friend, Mr. Campbell Johnstone.

With a whole theatre from France,
And Raftor, wont th' eclipse in Hays to dance,
Next Saturday, if fair or foul,
On bacon, ham, and chicken fowl,
Intend with Horace — no great bard,
In one of Epicurus herd,
To dine."

Mr. Cole, a laborious antiquarian, whose notes and diaries fill many volumes, once in 1779 paid a visit to Mr. Walpole, and gives this account of what he saw: "Mrs. Clive, the celebrated actress and comedian, has a little box contiguous to Mr. Walpole's garden, and close almost to the chapel. Here she lives retired, and her brother, Mr. Raftor, with her, but he was not disposed to stir out. . . . While I was at Strawberry Hill, I saw on the table a scrap of paper, with the following verses on Mrs. Clive, which I took a copy of, though I had no leave from Mr. Walpole for so doing; yet as they lay publicly for any one to see them, I thought it no breach of honour to copy them. They seemed to me, from the blotting and alterations of the writing, to have been lately composed, probably the evening before, while Mrs. Clive was present, and meant as a sportive and innocent amusement, to divert the time. They were written by way of epitaph, and on a supposition that Mrs. Clive was dead."

Her footman was recommended to her through an odd adventure. A retired officer, Captain

Prescott, who had married a young wife, used to treat her with such violence that his servant left him, and was engaged by Mrs. Clive. When the young lady could endure it no longer, he assisted her to elope. As some legal proceedings followed, he was examined, and when Lord Manfield asked him severely how he could do such a thing, replied "that his late master would have murdered his wife, so he had done him a service in saving him from being hanged!" an answer that delighted all at "Twittenham," and Mrs. Clive specially.

In December, 1780, the actress learned the death of her husband, Mr. George Clive, at a great age, who had now been separated from her nearly fifty years. He had long since retired to Bath, to enjoy the easy competence bequeathed to him by his friend Ince, of *Spectator* memory, and, according to the effusive testimony of the obituary notices, was lamented as a gentleman of extensive learning, and one of the first classical scholars of the age;" while "his philosophic disposition" enabled him to support his "various afflictions with a resignation which evinced his goodness of heart." He was esteemed and "visited by Mr. Melmoth," and "all the *literati* thought themselves honoured by his acquaintance." It was added that he owed much to the teachings of "that great master of all literature, Doctor Snape," on the mere "mention of whose name he ever paid the grateful tribute of a sigh." If Mr. George Clive was indeed such a

paragon, it is to be feared that the blame of the separation must be laid to the account of the fractious and less perfect Kitty.

In 1782 she had serious attacks of illness, and her old friend thought she could not survive. "I thought her in a bad way, her house is little less than an infirmary." In August, "poor Mrs. Clive is certainly very declining, but has been better of late; and, what I am glad of, thinks herself better." But in September she rallied, "Dame Cliveden is the only heroine among all us old dowagers; she is so much recovered, she ventures to go out cruising on all the neighbours," and in October he could write, "Mrs. Cliveden, I flatter myself, is nearly recovered, having had no relapses since. She even partakes of the carnival, which at Twickenham commences at Michaelmas, and lasts as long as there are four persons to make a pool. I am to go to her this evening for what she calls only two tables."

In July, 1783, she had her favourite Miss Pope with her. "Pope has been at Mrs. Clive's this week. I wrote a line of excuse, but hoped very soon to salute Miss Pope's eye."

But at last the intrepid old actress had to succumb:

"My poor old friend is a great loss. I had played cards with her at Mrs. Gostling's three nights before I came to town, and found her extremely confused, and not knowing what she

did, indeed I had perceived something of the sort before, and had found her much broken this autumn. It seems that the day after, she went to General Lister's burial and got cold, and has been ill for two or three days. On the Wednesday morning, she rose to have her bed made, with her maid by her, sunk down at once, and died without a pang or a groan. Her brother took the loss sadly to heart, — poor Mr. Raftor is shrunk to the greatest degree, and for some days would not see anybody. I sent for him to town to me, but he will not come till next week."

Her death occurred on December 6, 1785. Her old friend set up an urn in his gardens to her memory, — a testimonial then in fashion, — with this inscription :

"Ye smiles and jests still hover round;
This is mirth's consecrated ground.
Here lived the laughter loving dame,
A matchless actress, Clive her name.
The comic muse with her retired,
And shed a tear when she expired."[1]

[1] On which the venomous Walcot addressed some lines

"TO MR. HORACE WALPOLE.

On his inscription on an urn dedicated to Mrs. Clive,

By Peter Pindar, Esq.

Horace of Strawberry Hill, I mean not Rome,
Lo! all thy geese are swans I do presume —
Truth and thy trumpet seem not to agree:
Know comedy is heart, — all alive, —
The sprightly lass no more expired with Clive,
Then Dame humility will die with thee."

The old church at Twickenham is a quaint and comfortable structure of genial red brick, with a burly air, and pleasantly situated on the river bank in its own churchyard. Walking around it, we find on the outside wall, in an obscure corner at the back, a poorish, rather starved-looking tablet fixed against the wall, not a couple of feet square. This is the memorial to the famous actress set up by Miss Pope, and which could not have cost her friend more than a couple of pounds.

SACRED TO THE MEMORY OF
MRS. CATHERINE CLIVE,
WHO DIED DECEMBER 6TH, 1785,
AGED 75 YEARS.

This meagre memorial is, however, embellished by some indifferent verses, the composition of her sorrowing friend.

The faithful "Jemmy" Raftor did not long survive his gifted sister. He died on September 30, 1790, leaving behind him the reputation of a jovial, humourous creature, but of an indifferent performer. A friend recalled one last touch of character. "We remember," he says, with that tone of good-natured contempt which ever follows the *Viveur*, "her acting Bayes in 'The Rehearsal' with her brother, a very inferior actor, speaking (as usual) like a mouse in a cheese, in the character of bold Thunder! 'O fie, Mr. Raftor,' said she, 'speak out like a man. Surely you might have

learned more assurance from your sister!'" This was characteristic, and presents a happy sketch of brother and sister.

Our actress was something of an authoress, and her native vivacity, as we have seen, found vent in several light productions, pamphlets, controversial letters, and a few "pieces of occasion." Among these were "Bayes in Petticoats," already described,[1] "Every Woman in Her Humour," "Sketch of a Fine Lady's Return from a Rout," "The Island of Slaves," a translation — attributed to her on doubtful authority. She was never tired of ridiculing ladies of extravagant fashion, though she must have had no opportunities of studying their weaknesses, for she was not likely to have been admitted to their society. The same lack of opportunities must vitiate all attempts to portray the follies of the upper classes, — the mere palpable absurdities of dress and bearing being all the stock in trade that is available.

[1] In his article in the "National Biography," Sir T. Martin gives this piece as "Boys in Petticoats," — a diverting mistake.

CONCLUSION.

SUCH was Catherine Clive, whose character as well as whose performances have enriched the associations of literature, besides increasing the gaiety of the nation. As will have been seen from this trifling record, she was an interesting woman, straightforward and honourable in her character, — bright, gay, and good-natured. We recall her image with pleasure — even her little *boutades:* we could ill spare her from the histrionic ranks, for she was an actress of the first rank, well deserving the handsome encomium of Goldsmith, who had seen the leading performers of Europe. "She has more true humour," he wrote, "than any actress upon the English or any other stage I have seen."

THE END.

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